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ABSTRACT

This document comprises the 12 issues for 2000 of the "Child Support Report," which explores problems related to child support enforcement, reports on federal and state government child support enforcement initiatives, and summarizes research related to child support. Featured regularly are editorials and information on events of interest and funding opportunities. Major topics include: (1) father involvement in poor unwed families, Texas' efforts to locate employment for fathers owing child support, and partnerships between child support agencies and other agencies in Indiana and Washington (January); (2) technologies to enhance customer service in Delaware, and a child support worker training academy in Maryland (February); (3) 1999 nationwide child support collections, a new federal fatherhood initiative, and Minnesota's efforts to link child support services with other family services (March); (4) military program using the Internet to issue wage withholding orders for family support, and Web-based training for child support enforcement workers in Texas (April); (5) technology-based training in Seattle, and South Carolina's First Things First media campaign (May); (6) benefits of father involvement, and interstate caseload migration patterns (June); (7) California's Major League Dads program, workplace data security, and Arizona's campaign to educate staff on welfare reform (July); (8) U.S. family structure, Connecticut's Joint Information and Problem Resolution Unit, Tennessee's performance management system, and Michigan's paternity establishment initiative (August); (9) nonresident fathers' access to employment-based health care coverage, and strengthening parent-child bonds in Illinois through birth certificate registrars (September); (10) obtaining military information, Virginia's automated child support system, and New Jersey's fatherhood initiative (October); (11) the National Child Support Enforcement Training Conference, and Mesa County, Colorado's Parental Responsibility Employment Program (November); and (12) Detroit Lions Football

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team promoting fatherhood, Georgia's genetic testing program, Indiana's efforts to strengthen fathers' role, and Maryland's Amnesty 2000 campaign (December). (KB)

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Child Support Report, 2000.

Volume 22, Numbers 1-12.

Phil Sharman, Editor

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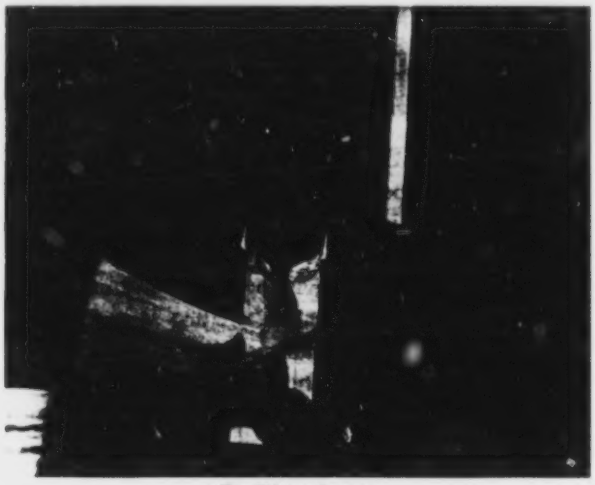
Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement — Vol. XXII, No. 1, January 2000

A Window of Opportunity

Fragile Families and Fathers

By: Debra Pontisso



Dr. Elaine Sorensen

Recently, Dr. Elaine Sorensen, a Principal Research Associate with the Urban Institute, provided OCSE staff with an updated statistical profile of father involvement in the lives of their children, with a particular emphasis on "fragile families."

Preliminary data from two cities—Austin, Texas and Oakland, California—show that an overwhelming majority of unwed mothers and fathers (82 percent) were seeing each other regularly and/or cohabiting at the time of the child's birth. These data are from an ongoing larger survey, called Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing, in which more than 3,600 unwed parents in 21 cities are being interviewed at the time of their child's birth (for more information on this, see www.opr.princeton.educ/crcw/ff).

Based on nationally representative survey data, Dr. Sorensen also showed that father involvement remains high during the first two years of children's lives when they are born outside of marriage. The Urban Institute's National Survey of America's Families shows that 62 percent of children under the age of two born to unwed parents either lived with both of their parents (30 percent) or lived with their mother and saw their father at least once a week (32 percent).

These data appear to dispel the notion that most children born to unwed parents are a result of casual sexual encounters. The data also suggest that when a child is very young, most unwed parents attempt to establish an intact family, which Dr. Sorensen and others are now referring to as "fragile families." Twenty-seven percent of poor children under the age of two are living in fragile families, according to Dr. Sorensen.

These data appear to dispel the notion that most children born to unwed parents are a result of casual sexual encounters.

As poor children get older, however, the likelihood that their fathers are highly involved in their lives diminishes considerably. For example, 59 percent of poor children aged 13 to 17 live with their mothers, and their nonresident fathers are not highly involved in their lives. Only 24 percent of these children live with their fathers or see their fathers at least once a week (these numbers include children living with their two natural, married parents). In

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Fragile

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contrast, when poor children are under the age of two, nearly two-thirds of them live with their fathers or see their fathers at least once a week. (See sidebar for more on research into fragile families.)

In Dr. Sorensen's view, a "window of opportunity" exists in the fact that unwed mother-father relationships are strongest when their children are very young. As she points out, research shows that most unwed fathers of young children are initially involved and most unwed mothers want them to be. This becomes a reason to begin thinking about developing interventions at this stage of their relationships that would foster, support, and enable them to maintain or encourage family formation on a more permanent basis. These interventions, Dr. Sorensen believes, could be offered to unwed couples who are still considering the possibility of establishing an intact family, as well as those unwed mothers and fathers who are living together.

One intervention that might be appropriate for these fragile families is the use of community-based or faith-based organizations to help them overcome barriers to working together on behalf of their children. While the main goal of these services would be to encourage the establishment of intact families, if it appears that the unwed couple is unwilling to move in that direction, these organizations might still help the parents work together for the sake of their children.

For low-income families, Dr. Sorensen suggests the development of a comprehensive package of support services that includes employment-oriented services for both parents, as well as family-oriented services. These services should view the family as the unit of intervention regardless of whether the mother and father are married or living together. In addition, she believes it would be worthwhile for state and local child support agencies to think about developing "user friendly" information materials—perhaps a resource guide—that would provide unwed parents who want to stay together with information about available services in their community.

If you are interested in learning more about Dr. Sorensen's research, she can be contacted at the Urban Institute, 2100 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, telephone (202) 833-7200.□

Debra Pontisso is Advocacy Relations Specialist-Fatherhood Initiative in OCSE.

More on Fragile Families

The "Fragile Families and Welfare Reform" research project, directed by Irwin Garfinkel and Sara McLanahan, is attempting to shed light on factors which result in the lack of family formation among unwed parents and which contribute to the decline in father involvement over an extended period of time. This research project, which is responsible for the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Survey discussed in Debra Pontisso's article on Dr. Sorensen's research, plans to follow both parents of a child born outside of marriage for five years after the child's birth for the purpose of tracking changes, if any, in parental relationships, living situations, and the level of father responsibility and involvement.□

Job Fair Helps Dads

By: Geraldine I. Jones

The Prince George's County, Maryland, Office of Child Support Enforcement, in cooperation with the County's Workforce Services Corporation, recently hosted a job fair for unemployed noncustodial parents. Twenty-six Washington metro area employers participated in the event called "Getting More Dads Involved in Jobs," while 75 noncustodial parents attended.

The fair featured workshops on job search, interviewing tips, and resume writing. Onsite resume services also were provided by child support staff. Participants presented completed resumes to job fair employers, and six dads were hired on the spot. Many others were interviewed and are being considered for placement by the participating companies.

"This event is a good indicator of our commitment to helping fathers find employment and to helping children receive the child support they need and deserve," said Prince George's County Child Support Director Geraldine Jones. The fair's coordinators, Daria Millard and Denise Hall, attributed success to the teamwork of child support staff, employers, and partners. The fair prompted numerous calls from custodial and noncustodial parents asking when the next one would be scheduled. The agency hopes to be able to do another job fair next Spring.

For more information, contact Geraldine Jones at (301)952-3649.□

Geraldine Jones is Executive Director, Prince George's County Government Office of Child Support Enforcement.

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Reforming Interstate Case Processing

By: Dianne Offett

The Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 mandated states to adopt the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA). One of the major provisions of UIFSA is that an interstate child support case should have only one order that is entitled to prospective (future) enforcement. This "controlling order" principle will move child support enforcement into a new way of establishing and enforcing child support orders. The state with this order is known as the controlling order state (COS).

(A) major provision of UIFSA is that an interstate child support case should have only one order that is entitled to prospective . . . enforcement. This "controlling order" principle will move child support enforcement into a new way of establishing and enforcing child support orders.

Previously, IV-D interstate procedures were based on the Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act (URESA). As a result of URESA's liberal order establishment procedures, many child support cases have multiple orders and arrears accruing under several orders. This means the child support practitioners must reconcile these orders to one prospectively enforceable order and also reconcile the arrears. This can be difficult because responsibility for maintenance of the payment record is not clear, and customers do not know what the arrearages are.

Over a year ago, OCSE's Division of Policy and Planning formed a work group called the Interstate Reform Initiative (IRI). This work group is composed of appointed state representatives, federal policy and interstate representatives, and an advisory group of interstate experts. Their task is to develop an interstate payment process that delivers child support payments to custodial parents and/or children as expeditiously and accurately as possible. It should emphasize uniform standards for disbursement, distribution, and interstate case processing, and also improve interstate accounting.

The IRI Work Group has had several meetings to discuss scenarios on how interstate cases are processed now and how current cases and future ones could be processed under UIFSA case processing principles. Discussion topics include general case processing issues, the Controlling Orders States' (COS) responsibility, features of interstate case management, establishment of a support order, determining the controlling order, reconciling arrearages, responsibility of enforcement, receipts, distribution, disbursement, maintaining the payment records, and system implications.

In September, the work group developed its first working draft concept paper. Currently, the state and federal policy and interstate representatives are meeting with states' IV-D directors, CSE practitioners, and CSE associations to solicit comments on the concept paper. The work group representatives plan to meet with as many groups as possible to obtain and consider comments before making revisions.

The work group has prepared a calendar of events through August 2000 at which a work group representative will present the concept paper and solicit comments. If you are interested in attending one of the meetings, please contact Dianne Offett at (202) 401-5425.□

Dianne Offett is OCSE's Interstate Liaison Officer.

Verifying Employment with New Hire Data

New Hire Reporting, which has been in operation nationally for little more than two years, has achieved impressive results. From the beginning of the program through November 19, 1999, a total of 110 million new hire (NH) records and a per quarter average of 137 million quarterly wage (QW) records have been posted to the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH).

Employers have been key partners in the success of New Hire Reporting.

In the first year of the program there were more than one million matches—employment and address information returned to states to assist in the location of noncustodial parents who owe child support. In the second year, with the addition of the Federal Case Registry (FCR) to the matching system, this number increased to 2.9 million matches.

The quality of the NDNH data sent to states is a key factor in reducing unnecessary employer verification requests. States have good reason to have confidence in New Hire data. One state studied the quality of matches returned to three of its counties from the NDNH and found that 82 percent of new hire data sent resulted in a successful locate. With accurate, current information about newly hired employees, child support agencies across the country have been able to locate noncustodial parents (NCPs) and issue income withholding orders more quickly than ever before.

Employers have been key partners in the success of New Hire Reporting. The timely submittal by employers of accurate data to the State Directory of New Hires (SDNH) is the first and critical link in the chain of this new locate system. Employers had hoped that the speed and accuracy of the new hire data they provide to states would reduce the need for employment verifications, which, because they must be manually processed, are time-consuming and costly.

No federal regulation requires states to verify employment before establishing a child support or income withholding order, and given that employment verification procedures are likely to pre-date new hire reporting, states may find it beneficial to review the purpose and relevance of employment verification when the data comes from the NDNH.

If permitted by state law and appropriate to the case, the child support agency is encouraged to issue an income withholding as soon as it gets information about an NCP's new employer. If the employee is no longer there, the employer, upon receipt of the withholding order, will notify the child support agency.

The support and cooperation of employers is essential to the success of the child support enforcement program. Eliminating unnecessary employment verifications can save employers time by reducing the amount of paperwork they must deal with, and this enhances the productivity of the child support program

If you would like more information, contact Mike Torpy at (202) 401-5510.□

Multistate Financial Institution Data Match (MSFIDM)

Current Status

- 2,837 Multistate Financial Institutions Participating;
- 3.7 million delinquent obligors on Inquiry File;
- 48 states receiving matches;
- 662,619 matches distributed to states from July, August and September match process;
- 485,252 noncustodial parents had one account matched; and
- 177,367 noncustodial parents had multiple accounts matched.

State Success Stories

West Virginia

A family had not received a payment in more than two years from tax offset, wage withholding, or benefit payments. The State received two matched accounts from MSFIDM: a savings account with a balance of over $25,000 and a checking account valued at $4,000, both of which listed the noncustodial parent's girlfriend as the primary account holder. The State recovered $16,000 from the non-custodial parent and distributed it to the family.

Ohio

The obligor resided in the State and had two cases with combined arrears totaling over $20,000. The State received a MSFIDM match on a savings account and seized $14,793 by freezing the account. The collection was prorated between the two cases and distributed to the two custodial parents.

Florida

To date, Florida has seized 232 accounts and collected $191,706.04 as a result of MSFIDM matches.□

A Father Friendly Approach to Child Support

By: Frank Powell Pierce

In Texas, the Attorney General's Office, which houses the child support agency, is helping to find jobs for noncustodial fathers who owe child support. In response to welfare reform, the Child Support Division of the Attorney General's Office is required to refer unemployed obligors who owe child support to local job training entities.

A primary resource in Harris County is the Houston Works Job Placement Center, which, with a Department of Labor grant and additional funding from the Hogg Foundation, has established the Young Fathers in Families Project.

So far, more than 200 fathers have been referred either by court or voluntary referral.

In addition to employment training, young fathers may receive counseling for substance abuse, as well as training in parenting skills, life skills, and mediation techniques if needed to help prepare them for stable employment. The goal is to strengthen these young families and promote their healthy development through employment and other related services.

Referrals are made either by a Court Master or District Judge. The court makes participation a condition of the court order and sets a minimum of 30 days as the date of compliance with the court order. After placement, regular progress reports are filed by the placement service and the child support division monitors payment of support.

The goal is to strengthen these young families and promote their healthy development through employment and other related services.

Currently, in Harris County the two Child Support Masters are setting hearings and placing noncustodial parents into the Houston Works project on a regular basis. So far, more than 200 fathers have been referred either by court or voluntary referral. Referral criteria include high school dropout with low reading skills, poor work history, and/or substance abuse problems. Participants must meet two of these criteria to be eligible for placement.

While the project is too new to have produced statistical outcomes, Houston Works managers indicate that participants are enthusiastic and determined to succeed. As has been said, "the provision of genuine employment opportunities represents the surest route out of poverty for our nation's poor families and children."*

The Houston Works Job Placement Center, working with the Texas Attorney General's Office and a group of 19 local agencies in and around Harris County, is setting out to justify that sentiment by providing young fathers with stable employment and other opportunities.□

Frank P. Pierce is a former State Judge and the Senior Regional Attorney for the Texas Attorney General's Office in Region 6, which includes Houston (Harris County) and eight surrounding counties.

*The quotation is from John Naisitt, *Mega Trends 2000.*

Indiana Child Support and Head Start Enter into Partnership

By: Geneva Evans Bishop

Indiana's State Child Support Bureau has entered into a partnership with the State's Head Start Association. Formalized by a Memorandum of Understanding, the two organizations agree to provide positive assistance to children and their parents in promoting the well-being of the family structure. This includes exchanging program information, participating in joint training, and trading appropriate referrals.

This initiative follows the partnership agreement between the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement and the National Head Start Association.

"It's a natural connection."

.....Joseph B. Mamlin, Deputy Director of Indiana Division of Family and Children.

"As Head Start programs develop local agreements with their child support offices," said Debbie Beeler, President of the Indiana Head Start Association, "I know families will benefit from the new relationships we are building." Joseph B. Mamlin, Deputy Director of Indiana's Division of Family and Children, agreed. "It's a natural connection," he said, "and I plan to continue to support and encourage communication between child support offices and local Head Start agencies."

On October 27, child support and Head Start staff presented a panel at Region V's (Chicago) Head Start Association training conference in Detroit. They discussed their partnership activities and the challenges of establishing a collaborative relationship. The group has been invited to present at Indiana's Child Support Alliance's annual training conference in June, 2000.

"To me," summed up Indiana's Head Start partnership Coordinator Donna Hogle, "the bottom line is that children will be more likely to receive the economic support that is their due and the responsibility of every person who parents a child."

If you would like more information about this initiative, contact OCSE's Geneva Bishop at (312) 353-8416.□

Geneva Bishop is a Program Specialist in OCSE's Chicago Regional Office.

OCSE CBT Course Wins Award

OCSE recently received a prestigious training award from Brandon Hall, a leading provider of information services to the technology-based training industry. Awarded the Bronze Medal for its computer-based training (CBT) course, Child Support Enforcement Orientation, the agency won in the category *Technical Skills Training-CD ROM/Disk, Custom Program, Medium/Small Budget.* Other winners in the awards program included such technology industry giants as Arthur Andersen, Microsoft, and IBM.

The Award Program's goal is to recognize the best multimedia and web-based training programs, showcasing exceptional instructional design and providing feedback and benchmarking to program developers. A panel of leading instructional designers, multimedia training professionals and Internet experts judged entries.

This award reflects OCSE's commitment to technology-enabled training via development of CBTs. OCSE, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Graduate School and Human Technology Inc., developed six CBT courses for the federal and state child support enforcement community. Thanks also to the members of the National CSE Training Work Group for their hard work.

This award reflects OCSE's commitment to technology-enabled training via development of CBTs.

This CBT Development Project supports Executive Order Number 13111, "Using Technology to Improve Training Opportunities for Federal Government Employees." The Order states that "a coordinated Federal effort is needed to provide flexible training opportunities to employees and to explore how Federal training programs, initiatives, and policies can better support lifelong learning through the use of learning technology."

Congratulations to Michelle Jefferson, Director, Division of State and Local Assistance, Yvette Hilderson Riddick, Chief, National Training Center, Charlene Butler, Project Officer, and the rest of the National Training Center staff for their fine work in producing this award-winning CBT course.□

Child Support and Law Enforcement Team Up in Washington State

By: Steve Tivel

During 1998, OCSE representatives met with law enforcement leaders in the Seattle Region to discuss how partnering can dramatically improve the enforcement results of difficult-to-collect child support cases. One outcome of the meeting: the King County, Washington model. King County Sheriff Dave Reichert recognized the link between a family that benefits from child support services and a healthier community. A cooperative partnership agreement was reached between King County (the State's most populous county) and the State Division of Child Support. The Sheriff formed a Special Support Enforcement Unit to team up with child support enforcement officers and prosecutors, targeting the most egregious nonsupport cases.

Between February and June 1999—its first five months of operation—the special unit, staffed with four full-time detectives and a clerk, cleared 407 child support-related arrest warrants. Deputies cleared an additional 72 misdemeanor and 8 felony warrants while serving the child support warrants.

Supported in part by federal funds, the Special Support Enforcement Unit operates out of the Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigation Division. "I commend Sheriff Reichert and the division of child support for their collaboration on this project and hope it will become a successful effort for other counties across the state," said HHS Regional Director Mike Kreidler. "This partnership," he continued, "provides a two-fold benefit – enforcement of the rule of law and essential justice in our community, and the collection of necessary support for our children."

Judicial enforcement on hard-to-collect cases is generally reserved as a last resort remedy in a State like Washington where the majority of collections are achieved through administrative remedies. But for those difficult cases that end up as contempt referrals prosecuted through the courts, law enforcement plays a key role in completing the enforcement process and realizing maximum collection potential.

If you would like more information, contact Steve Tivel at (206) 341-7443.□

Steve Tivel is a Support Enforcement Officer IV in Washington State's Division of Child Support.

2000 Conference Calendar

January

10-12 *Minnesota Family Ties Summit*, Radisson Hotel, Bloomington, MN, Molly Crawford (651) 215-6279.

February

2-4 *Arizona State Fatherhood Conference*, Mesa Community College, Mesa, AZ, Robin Wolf (520) 723-1212.

7-9 *NCSEA Year 2000 Policy Forum*, Hyatt Regency on the Hill, Washington, DC, Carol Henry (202) 624-8180.

15-17 *Interstate Reform Initiative*, Embassy Suites, Washington, DC, Jan Rothstein (202) 401-5073. By Invitation Only.

22-25 *California Family Support Council Quarterly Meeting*, Riviera Resort & Racquet Club, Palm Springs, CA, Noanne St. Jean (559) 582-3211 X 2403.

March

1-3 *Louisiana CSE Assn. Annual Training Conference*, Holiday Inn Central, Lafayette, LA, Michael D. Brown (225) 342-4780.

14-16 *Big Eight Information Sharing Conference*, Hyatt Regency, Dallas, TX, Dan Fascione (215) 686-3724.

16-17 *Wisconsin CSE Assn. Spring Training Conference*, Mead Hotel, Wisconsin Rapids, WI, Linda Check (715) 346-1307.

19-22 *National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges National Conference on Juvenile Justice*, Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel, Tampa, FL, James Toner (775) 784-6012.

27-29 *OCSE Interstate Conference*, Hilton Alexandria Mark Center, Alexandria, VA, Kathy McCaughin (202) 401-0904.

27-29 *Ohio CSE Assn. 8th Annual Spring Conference*, Adam's Mark Hotel, Columbus, OH, Cheryl Markino (614) 228-5551.

31 *Oklahoma CSE Association Spring Conference*, Marriott Hotel, Oklahoma City, OK, Barbara Hatfield (405) 262-8789.

April

12-14 *Mississippi CSE Assn. 9th Annual Conference*, Bayview Resort, Biloxi, MS, Monty Simpkins (601) 965-1200.

May

1-5 *Fifth Annual Bi-Regional Interstate Child Support Conference*, Site TBA, Reno, NV, J.P. Soden (415) 437-8421.

3-5 *North Dakota Family Support 11th Annual Training Conference*, Site TBA, Fargo, ND, Kathleen Ziegelmann (701) 241-5640 or Rosanne Robinson (303) 844-3100 X 394.

9-11 *California Family Support Council Quarterly Meeting*, Granlibakken Resort & Conference Center, Tahoe City, CA, Noanne St. Jean (559) 582-3211 X 2403.

21-24 *ACF User's Group*, Galt House, Louisville, KY, Robin Rushton (202) 690-1244. State and Federal Staff Only.

21-25 *Eastern Regional Interstate Child Support Association*, Marriott Renaissance Center, Detroit, MI, John Graham (724) 830-3263.□

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Child Support Report

Proposed Food Stamp Rule Issued

By: Marilyn R. Cohen

A proposed rule was issued December 17, 1999 in the Federal Register (64 **FR** 70919) by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Department of Agriculture, implementing provisions of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (welfare reform). The proposed rule allows states to require food stamp recipients to cooperate with child support as a condition of food stamp eligibility.

The rule also allows states to disqualify individuals who are in arrears in court-ordered child support payments. We encourage you to review the proposed rule and forward any comments to the FNS during the comment period, which ends February 15, 2000. If you have any questions or would like a copy of the rule, please contact Marilyn R. Cohen at (202) 401-5366.☐

Marilyn Cohen is a Program Specialist in OCSE's Division of Policy and Planning.

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If you have enjoyed this issue of ***Child Support Report****, please pass it on to a co-worker or friend.*

Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement Vol. XXII, No. 2, February 2000

An Interview with Mary Ann Wellbank

On December 21, *CSR* spoke with Mary Ann Wellbank, President of the National Council of Child Support Directors. Mary Ann also is the Child Support Director in Montana, a position she has held since 1991.

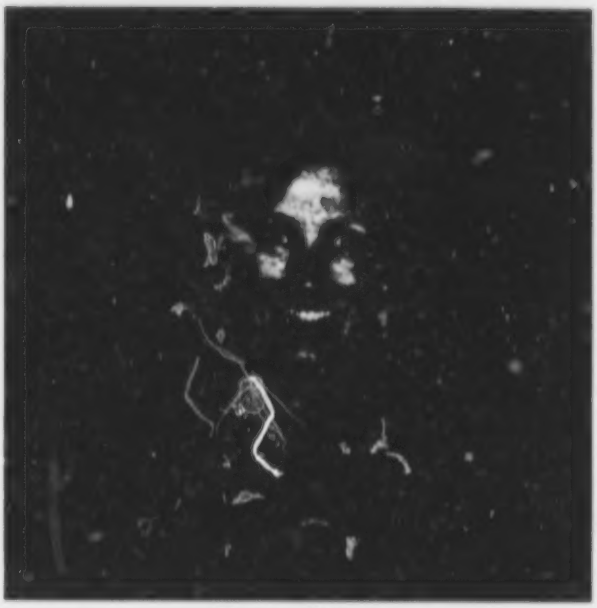
CSR: *Thanks for talking with us, Mary Ann. You've been a state child support director longer than many. It might be interesting for our readers to hear what kind of work you did before you came to child support.*

MA: I was in financial work in Chicago, doing banking and commodities futures credit management. In 1985 I moved to Helena, Montana, taking a job with State Worker's Compensation and later moving over to the Governor's Budget Office. I got interested in child support as I saw what a progressive and dynamic program it is and how it can really make a difference for families. When the opportunity came to be a part of it I didn't hesitate.

CSR: *Did your financial background help to prepare you for the responsibilities you've faced as a child support director?*

MA: Absolutely. I believe my financial background has been a plus. As everyone knows, the '90s have been a period of tremendous growth in child support–Montana's program had about 50 employees when I joined it, now we have 200. Anytime you have that kind of growth, there's a great deal of change to manage. And *that* always means there will be lots of sticky issues to deal with—many of them of a financial nature.

CSR: *Let's talk about the National Council of Child Support Directors. That's a new name. Is it the same organization?*



Mary Ann Wellbank

MA: It is a new name and one that I think most people will find easier to remember than the old one—the National Council of State Child Support Enforcement Administrators. But it's the same organization. State and territorial child support directors are automatically members. The council serves as a forum for directors to talk with each other, trade ideas, offer support, and the like. It also is a mechanism for us to communicate with OCSE, the Federal Office, and other entities. We meet in formal session at least three times a year. We're affiliated with NCSEA, so two of the meetings are in conjunction with them: in Washington, DC at the winter policy forum and again in summer at their national conference. The annual meeting this year will be in Montana.

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Interview

Continued from page 1.

CSR: *What's your primary goal as president, and what do you see as major issues for the program and for the council?*

MA: Well, first I want to ensure that our organization maintains a proactive role in identifying, prioritizing, and evaluating issues and continues to be a key participant in national discussions about those issues. Keeping a strong partnership with OCSE is a prominent part of this. I think that over the past several years our relationship with OCSE has matured into one of a "partnership of equals" in terms of exploring issues that are important to the program. Two very crucial issues this year are data reliability and SDUs.

I want to ensure that our organization maintains a proactive role in identifying, prioritizing, and evaluating issues and continues to be a key participant in national discussions about those issues.

CSR: *What about major strengths, again of the progam and the council?*

MA: For both, dedicated, knowledgeable, and energetic people who really care about children.

CSR: *You've done some things with privatization in Montana. Do you think we're going to see more of that in the program generally?*

MA: I think so, though I prefer to call it public/private partnerships. We have new programs coming on line that demand expertise that isn't always available within an agency. In those cases I think it's great that we can turn to private sector firms for help. They have flexibility to add employees, equipment, and state-of-the-art technology, all of which can enhance government services. The SDUs, I think, are a good candidate for public private/partnership. What you have to keep in mind is that *it is* a partnership. The state is still accountable to the public for the program.

CSR: *In your judgment, where does the program need to put its energies over the next few years?*

MA: What we need to do, and I expect the council will be an important part of this, is finish laying a solid foundation for PRWORA and the Incentive Act. States are just completing revolutionary programming, operational, and statutory changes to their child support programs and will need to devote time and resources to fine tuning these processes, as well as to evaluating results. The foundation we are laying now will provide a structure for improved interstate enforcement and medical support. And we need to continue to focus on funding issues—making sure all states are up to speed with data reliability, introducing the cost avoidance benefits of the program, and ensuring the incentive structure is sound.

CSR: *Big issues.*

MA: Big program.

CSR: *Anything else?*

MA: Just a "thank you" to those directors whose hard work has made the National Council of Child Support Directors a serious and effective child support organization. And a welcoming invitation to new directors and to those who haven't been active: please join with us. We need you. We will continue to face many challenges, and your input, expertise, and perspective can help formulate the issues and shape the future of this program.

CSR: *Thank you.*□

Step-parent Families and the Payment of Child Support

Does the remarriage of a noncustodial father who owes child support negatively effect support payments? Conventional wisdom has held that remarriage might mean a decrease in the number and amount of child support payments.

But there appears to be little support for this thinking in the somewhat sparse research literature that exists on the topic, according to a report prepared for OCSE by Applewhite Research and Management Services. Applewhite reports that the few studies either find an increase in support payments when the noncustodial father remarries or no effect one way or the other.

The question is an important one because from 1980 to 1990 the number of step-families in the United States increased by 36 percent to 5.3 million, largely as a result of an increasing divorce rate. Some observers project that by the year 2007 step-families will outnumber traditional nuclear families in the U.S.

Focus group participants agreed that spouses who owe child support should be encouraged to pay it and to maintain a relationship with the children.

Although there is often an expectation that step-parents will assume a parental role, remarriage in the U.S. does not confer upon step-parents any legal relationship with the step-children. The question also has implications for child support. With time limited assistance in effect, child support payments have taken on a greater importance than ever before. Policy makers can benefit from knowing what effect, if any, step-parents have on the payment of support.

As part of its contract with OCSE, Applewhite conducted a series of focus groups with step-parent families to gain their views on child support. Mothers in particular encourage their spouses to pay child support because they know how important the money is to a family. In general, focus group participants agreed that spouses who owe child support should be encouraged to pay it and to maintain a relationship with the children.□

Census Bureau Reports Increase in Uninsured

An estimated 44.3 million people in the United States, or 16.3 percent of the population, had no health insurance in 1998—an increase of about 1 million people since 1997, according to the Census Bureau. The status of children's health care coverage did not change significantly from 1997 to 1998, with 11.1 million, or 15.4 percent of all children under age 18 uninsured.

44.3 million people in the United States, or 16.3 percent of the population, had no health insurance in 1998.

Other findings:

- Children 12-17 years of age were slightly more likely to be without health care coverage (16.0 percent) than those under age 12 (15.1 percent);
- About one-half (47.5 percent) of poor full-time workers did not have health insurance in 1998; and
- The Medicaid program insured 14.0 million poor people, but about one-third of all poor people (11.2 million) had no health insurance.□

Data are from the March 1999 Current Population Survey.

Alaska and Pennsylvania Systems Certified

In December, Pennsylvania and Alaska received certification of their automated systems. This brings to 43 the number of states that have received certification of their statewide automated systems.□

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New Technologies Enhance Customer Service in Delaware

By: Karryl D. Hubbard

Delaware's Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE) has recently implemented two new technologies designed to enhance customer service: an Automated Assistance Line and an Automated Call Distribution system. In response to a customer's account number, the Automated Assistance Line provides pre-recorded answers to routinely asked questions regarding basic services provided by DCSE, including current account information.

Automated Call Distribution enables our Customer Service Unit to monitor the frequency and length of phone calls and the average wait before a customer is served. This information makes it possible for the Division to adjust staffing to best respond to the volume of calls received.

Fueling this change is Delaware DCSE's desire to provide timely and accurate service to customers. The Automated Assistance Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

All incoming phone calls are now answered by a Customer Service Unit. Customers have the opportunity to select from a menu of options to receive automated information or to speak directly with a Customer Service Representative. For questions not answered by the Automated Assistance Line, Customer Service Representatives will research individual cases and answer questions during normal business hours.

The new system provides several benefits.

- It makes payment information available 24 hours a day;
- It makes Customer Service Representatives available during normal business hours to discuss cases; and
- It promotes consistency in response to customer inquiries.

For more information, contact Allan Zaback at (302) 577-4815 X 268.□

Karryl Hubbard is the Director of Delaware's Division of Child Support Enforcement.

OCSE Releases Paternity Video

By: Debra Pontisso

In an effort to increase the number of voluntary paternity acknowledgments nationwide, OCSE, with the assistance of partners and stakeholders, recently produced and distributed to state child support agencies copies of a new paternity video for unwed parents entitled, *The Power of Two: Voluntarily Acknowledging Paternity*. The video also will assist states in complying with a recent legislative requirement to provide unwed parents with an oral as well as written explanation of their rights, responsibilities, and consequences of signing a paternity acknowledgment.

The video is expected to be of particular value to those persons, such as hospital, vital records, and child support staff, who work directly with unwed parents in providing the opportunity to voluntarily acknowledge paternity. Another objective of the video is to inform both parents of the importance of father involvement in the lives of their children.

. . . expected to be of particular value to those . . . who work directly with unwed parents in providing the opportunity to voluntarily acknowledge paternity.

State CSE agencies have been provided an original VHS copy of the video so that they can include their own state-specific "tag-line" or information at the end of the video and also make copies for distribution to hospitals, vital records, child support, and other community-based programs that serve unwed parents. States are free to duplicate the video for their own use.

At the national level, copies of the video have been sent to a variety of organizations, including the American Hospital Association, National Governors' Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the Association of State Public Health Statistics and Information Systems.

For further information, contact your state child support office, or OCSE's Debra Pontisso at (202) 401-4548, Internet dpontisso@acf.dhhs.gov.□

Debra Pontisso is OCSE Advocacy Relations Specialist—Fatherhood Initiative.

New Opportunities for Low Income Parents: The Welfare-to-Work Amendments

By: Dail Moore

The President recently signed Public Law 106-113, which includes the "Welfare-to-Work and Child Support Amendments of 1999." These Amendments make several significant changes to the Welfare-to-Work (WtW) grant programs administered by the Department of Labor, as well as changes to Child Support Enforcement. The WtW–related changes are designed to provide better service to parents of low-income children. Included in the changes are expanded participant eligibility and increased local options for program design.

The child support changes include authority for IV-D agencies to disclose specified information on noncustodial parents to private industry councils. The purpose is to enable the councils to identify and contact the noncustodial parents about participation in WtW. Provisions for safeguarding such information also are included.

The WtW–related changes are designed to provide better service to parents of low-income children.

WtW enrollment is a unique opportunity for low-income fathers to develop the skills to find and retain jobs that can lead to increased support of and involvement with their children. Research tells us that fathers who regularly pay support are more likely to spend time with their children.

Welfare-to-Work, created in 1997 as a complement to Welfare Reform, has the goal of moving welfare recipients and certain noncustodial parents into unsubsidized, lasting jobs which may lead to self-sufficiency. The focus is on those persons who face difficult barriers to employment—those, for example, who have been on welfare a long time.

WtW programs can offer a broad array of services to help enrollees prepare for, find, and retain unsubsidized jobs and become better able to support themselves and their children.

To fund the program, a total of $3 billion in formula and competitive grants was made available to states, local Private Industry Councils (now Workforce Investment Boards), and other organizations. Congress's authorization of the WtW Program clearly reflected an intent to capitalize on the private sector connection of the workforce investment system.

According to an Urban Institute study, "A number of start-up issues contributed to the delay in implementation of the program . . . [but] the most significant factor that has slowed implementation [was] the very tight eligibility criteria included in the law."

The 1999 Amendments greatly ease those formerly tight criteria, particularly with respect to noncustodial parents, who now have increased opportunities for referral to and enrollment in WtW. Under the Amendments, noncustodial parents are eligible if:

- They are unemployed or underemployed, or are having difficulty making child support payments;
- Their minor children are eligible for or receive TANF benefits (with priority for parents with children who are long-term recipients); received TANF benefits during the preceding year; or are eligible for or receive assistance from Food Stamps, Supplemental Security Income, Medicaid, or the Children's Health Insurance Program; and
- They enter into a personal responsibility contract under which they commit to establishing paternity, paying child support, and participating in services to increase their employment and earnings.

The Amendments also require grantees to consult with domestic violence organizations in developing these projects and allow noncustodial parents to be enrolled under the larger of the two funding pools.

In a subsequent article, we expect to discuss the data release issue and provide examples of IV-D involvement in WtW. Also, OCSE will be issuing guidance on the Amendments. If you have questions or want more information, please see the WtW website: http://wtw.doleta.gov or contact Dail Moore at dmoore@acf.dhhs.gov or by phone at (202) 401-3438.□

Dail Moore is the Team Leader of OCSE's Special Initiative's Branch and WtW Liaison Officer.

Maryland to Establish CSE Training Academy

By: John Clark

Under a grant from OCSE, the State of Maryland will establish a child support training academy for certification of its child support workers. The training academy will provide a core set of competencies based on the OCSE and Maryland strategic plans.

These competencies will be in compliance with all federal and State regulations. The training is expected to focus on the performance areas of paternity establishment, establishment of support orders, payment on current support, collections on arrears, and establishment of medical support orders.

The training is expected to focus on . . . paternity establishment, establishment of support orders, payment on current support, collections on arrears, and establishment of medical support orders.

"We work hard for children and families," said Teresa Kaiser, the Executive Director of the Maryland Child Support Enforcement Administration. "It's time our staff was recognized for their outstanding work."

Certification by the academy can be a major step in achieving that recognition. Academy certification will:

- Prepare workers to deliver consistently outstanding service to customers;
- Increase public trust and confidence in the child support program; and
- Bolster the confidence and self-esteem of the workers.

"We work hard for children and families. It's time our staff was recognized for their outstanding work."

.....Teresa Kaiser

The process for establishing Maryland's Training Academy includes research, focus groups, curriculum analysis, training design, and evaluation. Evaluation will focus on how the training program meets established goals for each competency area and how the competency of staff trained at the academy compares with those who received their training on the job.

According to OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross, there is national interest in CSE worker certification, and "we need to do all we can to encourage the professional development of our staff." In support of that, OCSE also has awarded a grant to the National Child Support Enforcement Association (NCSEA).

The NCSEA grant will examine the feasibility of a national certification program for child support workers. NCSEA has established a national advisory committee that includes workers, child support directors, OCSE staff, and other child support experts. The project will include a review of all available literature and a survey of all 54 state programs.

"The survey is vital to the success of the project," said Joel Bankes, Executive Director of NCSEA. "We appreciate the states' support in gathering the information, and we will, of course, share the results with them."

If you would like more information about Maryland's Training Academy, contact Dr. Elizabeth Debaugh-Stone at (410) 767-7724. For more information about the NCSEA study, contact Joel Bankes at (202) 624-8180.□

John Clark is a Program Specialist in OCSE's Region 3, Philadelphia, Office.

SIP Grants Available

OCSE invites eligible applicants to submit competitive grant applications for special improvement projects (SIP) that further the national child support mission, vision, and goals. Priority areas for award include (1) improving the management of undistributed collections; and (2) fostering improved interstate case processing.

OCSE also is interested in projects that focus on effective enforcement tools, foster cooperative relationships with law enforcement, and demonstrate other effective methods to increase collections, as well as demonstration projects that test and evaluate model review and adjustment procedures.

Approximately $2 million is available for FY 2000. The closing date for applications is March 6, 2000. For more information, phone OCSE's Jean Robinson at (202) 401-5330 or send an e-mail to jrobinson@acf.dhhs.gov.□

Multistate FIDM Successes in Ohio

By: Sarah Cooper

As states gear up to act on the matches supplied by Multi-State Financial Institution Data Match (MSFIDM), OCSE will share some of the successful collection results contributed by state FIDM coordinators.

Delaware County: First Ohio MSFIDM collection. A lien on a Certificate of Deposit resulted in $7,244.61. The agency distributed the funds to the custodial parent who will use the money to pay for the first year of college for his 16-year-old daughter.

Pickaway County: *Froze $1,600 credit union savings account based on a MSFIDM match. Rather than forfeiting the savings, obligor, who lived in Virginia, obtained loan for entire $2,400 arrears balance.*

Lorain County: Advance Notice of intent to seize account resulted in arrears payment of $3,542.92, bringing account current.

Lorain County: *Advance Notice issued on a joint account resulted in arrears payment of $1,738.15, bringing account current.*

Darke County: MSFIDM located three accounts totaling over $30,000 for one noncustodial parent. After necessary due process, the office received $2,375.85 in back child support.

Licking County: *Obtained monies from investment accounts in two separate cases. Arrears balances obtained in amounts of $3,829.02 and $892.93.*

Clermont County: MSFIDM match for $13,000 was reported on a noncustodial parent who owed $2000. The child support office sent an Access Withdrawal Restriction Notice on the account, prompting the obligor to pay $900 to bring the account out of default.

In Ohio, MSFIDM is working and we are seeing results. MSFIDM enables support to be secured in cases where traditional methods have not worked.

For more information, contact Sarah Cooper at (614) 752-9733 or by email at coopes@odhs.state.oh.us. □

Sarah Cooper is Ohio's FIDM Coordinator.

Rule Links Food Stamp Savings to Cooperation with Child Support

A proposed Food Stamp Program rule allows states to require food stamp recipients to cooperate with child support as a condition of food stamp eligibility and to disqualify individuals who are in arrears in court-ordered child support payments. (See Jan. 2000 *CSR.*)

An estimated 3,000 [food stamp recipients] will be disqualified as a result of being in arrears in court-ordered child support payments.

The Food Stamp Program estimates that in FY 1999 a total of 8,000 custodial and noncustodial parents will be disqualified due to sanctions for noncompliance; that an estimated 3,000 persons will be disqualified as a result of being in arrears in court-ordered child support payments; and that 68,000 custodial parents will have their benefits reduced due to compliance and increased child support income.

Savings to the Food Stamp Program over a period of five years (FY 1999-20003) as a result of noncompliance disqualifications are estimated to be $90 million, while savings over the same five-year period as a result of arrears disqualifications are estimated to be $25 million. □

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Child Support Report

In Iowa, Child Support Yields Savings in Other Programs

A recent report, *Child Support Enforcement Cost Avoidance: Evidence from Iowa*, finds that Iowa's child support enforcement efforts result in lower federal and State spending on TANF, Medicaid, and Food Stamps. Child support collections make custodial parents eligible for lower benefits in these programs.

In 1995, every dollar spent on the IV-D program in Iowa yielded $1.32 savings to TANF, $0.14 savings to Food Stamps, and $0.51 savings to Medicaid, for total savings of $1.97.

These results reflect federal and State savings and account for the fact that child support payments would still be made even in the absence of the IV-D program.

The Medicaid estimates could be even greater because the report estimate does not reflect savings resulting from third-party health insurance from medical support orders.

For more information, contact Brian Laatsch at blaatsc@dhs.state.ia.us.☐

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Vol. XXII, No. 3, 2000

Record Breaking Year for Child Support

HHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala has announced that the federal and state child support enforcement program broke new records in nationwide collections in fiscal year 1999, reaching $15.5 billion—nearly double the amount collected in 1992.

The federal government also collected a record $1.3 billion in overdue child support from federal income tax refunds for tax year 1998, an 18 percent increase over the previous year and a 99 percent increase since 1992. Nearly 1.4 million families benefited from these collections. In addition, a new program to match delinquent parents with financial records found 662,000 accounts since August 1999 with a value of about $1 billion.

"We make no apologies for using tough measures," the Secretary said, "but we also are striving to help those parents who can't meet their responsibilities find the means to do so."

"We make no apologies for using tough measures, but we also are striving to help those parents who can't meet their responsibilities find the means to do so." .....*Secretary Shalala*

The Secretary also reported that the Administration's criminal child support enforcement initiative, "Project Save Our Children," is succeeding in its pursuit of chronic delinquent parents who owe large sums of support. Multi-agency regional task forces have investigated 800 cases resulting in 275 arrests, 210 convictions, and the payment of $5.3 million in owed child support to date. These teams include representatives from OCSE, the HHS Office of Inspector General, state child support agencies, the Department of Justice, and local law enforcement organizations.

OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross

Since 1992, the Administration has made child support enforcement a critical priority. The National Directory of New Hires, which matches child support orders to employment records, has found more than 2.8 million delinquent parents in its two years of operation. Paternity establishment rose to 1.45 million in 1998, a more than three-fold increase from 516,000 in 1992. The Passport Denial Program has collected more than $2.25 million in lump sum child support payments and is currently denying 30 to 40 passports to delinquent parents per day.

"Every day the hardworking federal, state, local, and private employees in the child support enforcement program commit to their goal of putting children first," said OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross. "As these numbers show, their determination is paying big dividends to the nation's children and families." □

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Office of Child Support Enforcement

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White House Unveils Fatherhood Initiative

The White House has unveiled a major new initiative to promote work, child support, and responsible fatherhood. Part of the Administration's FY 2001 budget, the initiative will include new measures to:

- Collect child support from parents who can afford to pay;
- Ensure that more child support goes directly to families; and
- Provide funds to help more fathers who owe child support go to work.

The budget proposal includes $255 million for the first year of a new "Fathers Work/Families Win" initiative to help low-income noncustodial parents and low-income working families work and support their children.

. . . a new "Fathers Work/Families Win" initiative to help low-income noncustodial parents and low-income working families work and support their children.

Fathers Work

To ensure that low-income fathers who are not living with their children provide the financial and emotional support their children deserve, the Administration's budget will include $125 million for new "Fathers Work" grants. These grants will help approximately 40,000 low-income noncustodial parents (mainly fathers) work, pay child support, and reconnect with their children.

This initiative builds on . . . responsible fatherhood initiatives funded through the Labor Department Welfare-to-Work program.

As part of this effort, states will need to put procedures in place allowing them to require more parents who owe child support to pay or go to work, expanding the project to include parents of children not on welfare. This initiative builds on over $250 million in responsible fatherhood initiatives funded through the Labor Department Welfare-to-Work program.

Families Win

To reward work and responsibility and ensure that all families benefit from the economy, the Administration's budget will include $130 million in new grants to help hard-pressed working families get the supports and skills they need to succeed on the job and avoid welfare. These funds will leverage existing resources to help families retain jobs and upgrade skills, and get connected to critical work supports, such as child care, child suppport, health care, food stamps, housing, and transportation.

Families Win grants will serve approximately 40,000 low-income families, including mothers and fathers, former welfare recipients, and people with disabilities. Within these funds, $10 million will be set aside for applicants from Native American workforce agencies.

In addition, to help more long-term welfare recipients and low-income fathers go to work and support their families, state, local, tribal, and community-and faith-based grantees will receive an additional two years to spend Welfare-to-Work funds, ensuring that roughly $2 billion in existing resources continues to help those most in need. For more information, see the White House Website at http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/SOTUOO/.□

President Announces New Enforcement Initiatives

The President announced in his State of the Union address new enforcement proposals that will collect an estimated $2 billion for children over the next five years. These measures included booting the cars and intercepting large gambling winnings of delinquent parents, denying passports to parents who owe more than $2,500 in past due support (lowering the amount from the current $5,000), prohibiting Medicare participation by providers who owe support, and requiring more frequent updating of child support orders.

For further information, see the White House Website at http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/SOTUOO/.□

Minnesota Partnership

By: Molly Crawford

Focused on the partnership between family support, Head Start, child care and fathers groups, more than 400 government, nonprofit, and community leaders met January 10-12, 2000 at the Minnesota Family Ties Collaborative Summit in Bloomington. The partners were successful in efforts to tie together child support services with other services that provide emotional and financial support for children and their families.

A high point was a presentation by parents who shared their life experiences and the positive results for their families from child support services, Head Start, father's programs, Parents' Fair Share, and the Minnesota Family Investment (TANF) program.

Integrated within the Summit was a focus on fathers. According to Mary Anderson, sponsoring supervisor of the Summit, "Messages showed that fathers are important to their children but face many barriers to participating in their lives. The Summit made clear that we need to relate as partners to help fragile families become and stay self-sufficient."

"Partnerships are essential because we need every one at the table to help meet the many needs of families."..... Joyce Thomas

"The Summit built the conceptual framework for more family-focused service delivery," said Laura Kadwell, Director of Minnesota's Child Support Enforcement Division. Added Joyce Thomas, the Midwest Hub Director for ACF's Chicago Regional Office, "Partnerships are essential because we need every one at the table to help meet the many needs of families."

Workshop sessions offered opportunities to learn more about existing programs and services, community issues and initiatives, judicial influences, and human development and child-parent relationships.

For more information contact Molly Crawford at 651-215-6279.□

Molly Crawford is a Program Advisor in Minnesota's Child Support Enforcement Division.

OCSE Receives Hammer Award

From l. to r., Phillip Becker, SSA, Donna Bonar, OCSE, Dr. Lynn Sandra Kahn, Reinventing Gov't, Olivia Golden, ACF, David Gray Ross, OCSE.

OCSE has received Vice President Gore's Hammer Award for its success in collecting delinquent child support payments through the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH). Through fiscal year 1999, the NDNH has located 2.8 million parents who were delinquent in their child support payments.

"The national directory and its dedicated federal staff are indispensable to the child support enforcement program, assuring that children receive the support they need and deserve," the Secretary said.

Under the program, the nation's 6.4 million employers report information on newly hired employees to their state child support agencies. States then forward the information, along with quarterly wage and unemployment insurance records, to the NDNH, an automated centralized repository of employment information.

"Receiving the Hammer Award is a tribute to an incredible partnership, including the team that worked so hard implementing a complex system on time and within budget, and to the millions of employers who make it work everyday," said Olivia A. Golden, HHS Assistant Secretary for Children and Families.

"I am very proud of the nation's child support workers and employers," said OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross. "Together, we successfully implemented the National Directory of New Hires on time, thereby helping our ultimate customer, children in need. This is government-private sector partnership at its best."□

Georgia Begins Training Program for New Employees

Georgia's training program for CSE employees focuses on meeting the job-related knowledge needs of newly hired or recently promoted CSE staff. The State has contracted with the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government to provide the training. Institute faculty present and facilitate all topics comprising the new training program.

Classes, conducted at the Macon Training Center, began on July 12, 1999 for all employees hired or promoted on or after October 1, 1998. The CSE New Employee Training consists of seven training modules that range from two to four days each, covering:

- Overview of CSE and Caseload Management;
- Intake/Case Registration/Locate;
- Establishment;
- Enforcement;
- Financial;
- Interstate; and
- Review and Modification.

The first graduates of the program were recognized at a ceremony in Macon on December 2, 1999. Thus far, more than 77 newly hired or promoted CSE staff have successfully completed their required modules. Participant evaluations indicate the training program is well presented and very beneficial.□

Arizona Receives Spirit of Excellence Award

Arizona Governor Jan D. Hull has awarded Arizona's Department of Economic Security the 1999 Spirit of Excellence Award for outstanding team performance in implementing the centralized payment processing system for child support collections. Arizona's State Disbursement Unit processes an average of 200,000 payments a month, at a value of $37 million. Our congratulations to the State's leadership and staff for this outstanding achievement.□

OCSE Names Deputy Commissioner

L. to r., Judge Ross, Olivia Golden, Frank Fuentes just after swearing in.

Frank Fuentes has been named Deputy Commissioner of OCSE. In this role he will provide executive leadership in the management of the national child support enforcement program, which now has 60,000 workers at all levels of government and a caseload in excess of 19 million.

"We are very fortunate to have Frank join us in the Office of Child Support Enforcement," said Commissioner David Gray Ross. "His extensive experience in administering complex programs and his partnership-building skills will be superb additions to the nation's child support program. He possesses a genuine and long-standing desire to help children."

Most recently, Mr. Fuentes was the Deputy Associate Commissioner of ACF's Child Care Bureau. In his five years at the Bureau, he oversaw and directed the administration of the $3.1 billion Child Care and Development Fund, which serves 1.5 million children and their families. From 1989 to 1995, he directed the Migrant Head Start Program and over the years has held a variety of other positions of responsibility within DHHS.

The recipient of numerous honors and awards during his government service, Mr. Fuentes is married and the father of six children, including one adopted child. He and his wife also have been foster parents to 45 children.□

Child Support Population Estimates for the Years 1988 and 1998

By Hans P. Johnson

Recently developed estimates of the child support population—children, parents who live with them, other adult custodians, and noncustodial parents—provide an interesting profile of child support populations in the United States. Between 1988 and 1998, the total number of children and their custodians eligible for child support grew by 32 percent, more than double the overall population growth rate.

The fastest growing segment of the child support population is made up of custodians who are not *themselves the parents of the children for whom they care.*

As of 1998, an estimated 17 million custodians were the primary caregivers for almost 28 million children eligible for child support. In addition, there were 19 million noncustodial parents, bringing the total child support population in 1998 to an estimated 64 million people, or almost one of every four Americans.

Although the vast majority of custodians are parents (in 1998, 86 percent), the fastest growing segment of the child support population is made up of custodians who are *not* themselves the parents of the children for whom they care. The number of nonparent custodians increased 48 percent between 1988 and 1998, compared to 29 percent for child support eligible custodial parents. A substantial share of nonparent custodians are grandparents; in 1998, they represented 45 percent of all nonparent custodians.

A substantial share of nonparent custodians are grandparents; in 1998, they represented 45 percent of all nonparent custodians.

Overall, one of every three children in the United States lives in a home with either no parents or only one parent. The families of such children are relatively impoverished, with low levels of education among the adults and high rates of poverty for the entire household.

In particular, never married custodians and their children face especially bleak economic conditions. For example, in 1998 almost half (46 percent) of never married custodians and their children lived in poverty. Past increases in nonmarital childbearing have made this group one of the fastest growing segments of the child support population. Custodians who are not the parents of the children they care for also tend to have especially poor economic outcomes, with 30 percent living in poverty in 1998.

Other findings from the data include:

- A small but significant number of noncustodial parents are in prison—5.4 percent in 1998;
- Just 39 percent of the children of noncustodial mothers live with the children's fathers, while almost 90 percent of the children of noncustodial fathers live with the children's mothers; and
- The use of public assistance among child support populations declined dramatically between 1988 and 1998, while poverty rates declined only slightly. For example, among never married custodial parents, the group most likely to be in poverty and receiving public assistance, public assistance utilization rates decreased from 45 percent in 1988 to 26 percent in 1998. Over the same time frame, poverty rates fell from 55 percent to 46 percent.

For more information, contact OCSE's Phil Sharman at (202) 401-4626.□

Source of data: March and April supplements of the Current Population Surveys, and the Bureau of Justice Statistics surveys of inmates (federal, state, and local).

Funding for this project is provided by OCSE's Division of Consumer Services.

Hans Johnson is a Demographer with Acumen LLC and the Public Policy Institute of California.

IRS Customer Service

By: Frank Fajardo

Government agencies, like businesses in the private sector, must earn the confidence of their customers by knowing who they are, listening to what they have to say, and providing reliable and high quality service to them. To continue to enhance customer service in the nation's child support program, we visited the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to learn more about what they have been doing in customer service.

IRS Commissioner Charles O. Rossotti has defined the agency's mission as one of providing America's taxpayers "top quality service by helping them understand and meet their tax responsibilities and by applying the tax law with integrity and fairness to all."

To listen to what IRS customers have to say, IRS Citizen Advocacy Panels (CAPs) hold public meetings around the country and monitor the effectiveness of IRS customer service. The CAPs gather citizen input, identify problems, make recommendations for improving service, and refer taxpayers to the appropriate IRS office for assistance. Each panel includes the local IRS Advocate and a dozen volunteer citizen members who serve terms of two to three years.

Viewing performance through taxpayers' eyes helps the agency identify customer needs, determine how well they are met, and make appropriate improvements.

IRS also has commissioned a long-term survey project to assess customer satisfaction. Viewing performance through taxpayers' eyes helps the agency identify customer needs, determine how well they are met, and make appropriate improvements. To improve communication with its customers, IRS has rewritten taxpayer notices and uses technology to make them available more quickly.

In addition, to respond to the public's need for faster access to tax information, IRS has made available a comprehensive menu of electronic services through the Internet, over which citizens can send comments and ask for help. Through IRS Newsstand (http://www.irs.ustreas.gov/news/index.html), taxpayers and businesses can get tax news releases as fast as the media.

The Digital Daily is available at http://www.irs.ustreas.gov/ for electronic services, tax regulations, forms and publications, and tax statistics. Also available: a Tax Calendar for Small Businesses with helpful hints, common filing dates, and general tax information.

Taxpayers can reach IRS by telephone on one of the nation's most heavily used 800-number operations. IRS has expanded telephone service to 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with a goal of 85-90 percent access rate and 96 percent accuracy rate. During tax season, IRS provides small businesses with 24 hour-a-day telephone assistance geared specifically to their needs, as well as expanded electronic services.

IRS uses a variety of media to publicize customer services, including public service announcements on its Problem Resolution commitment--"there to help"--as well as the agency's e-file campaign for getting tax forms and filing tax returns.

While passing tax laws and tax policy is the role of Congress, IRS has made much progress in implementing requirements through its strong commitment to understanding the customer's viewpoint as a way to prevent and solve problems and assure high quality service to its customers.□

Frank Fajardo is a Customer Service Specialist with OCSE's Division of Consumer Services.

Fragile Families

The National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership (NPCL) in continuing to engage community and faith-based organizations in providing services to fragile fathers and families and improving the interaction between these families and child support, recently conducted a Town Hall Meeting in New York City's (NYC) Harlem. NPCL activities are partially funded by a grant from OCSE.

"Strengthening the Bond: Dead-Broke Dads and Their Children," drew participation from over 100 fathers, researchers, and policy makers, including Robert Doar, Director of the Division of Child Support Enforcement for the State of New York, and Michael Infranco, Director of Child Support for NYC.

NPCL's upcoming International Fatherhood Conference at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in NYC (May 29-31) will include a keynote panel presentation and workshops featuring faith-based leaders discussing the provision of services to fathers and their families. For further information on the concept of involving community and faith-based leaders in the development of fatherhood programs and services for fragile families, please contact NPCL at (888) 528-6725.□

SDU Alternative Penalty

By: Simone Krah

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) added a Title IV-D state plan requirement for states to establish a State Disbursement Unit (SDU) by October 1, 1998. (Section 312 (d) of PRWORA allowed states that process child support payments through local clerks of court until October 1, 1999 to establish an SDU.)

On November 28, 1999, the President signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2000. Section 807 of this Act amended section 455 of the Social Security Act by adding a new subsection (a) (5), which provides an alternative penalty for states that fail to operate the SDU by the statutory deadlines.

OCSE issued *Action Transmittal 00-03* on January 2000 to provide guidance to states requesting the SDU alternative penalty.

Requesting the Alternative Penalty

Under this new provision, the SDU alternative penalty is available to a state which:

- The Secretary determines has made and is continuing to make a good-faith effort to comply with SDU requirements; and
- Has submitted to the Secretary, not later than April 1, 2000, a corrective compliance plan (which the Secretary approves) that describes how, by when, and at what cost the state will achieve such compliance.

A state requesting this alternative penalty must send a letter from the state's Chief Executive Officer and the corrective compliance plan to OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross with a copy to the appropriate Regional Administrator.

The Penalty Base

The amount of the alternative financial penalty is as follows:

- 4 percent of penalty base if the state fails to achieve compliance for the first fiscal year in which the failure by the state occurs;
- 8 percent of penalty base if the state fails to achieve compliance for the second such fiscal year;
- 16 percent of penalty base if the state fails to achieve compliance for the third such fiscal year;
- 25 percent of penalty base if the state fails to achieve compliance for the fourth such fiscal year;
- 30 percent of penalty base if the state fails to achieve compliance for the fifth or any subsequent such fiscal year.

The "penalty base" is the amount otherwise payable to the state (Federal share of expenditures) in the preceding fiscal year at the 66 percent matching rate for CSE administrative costs.

If a state complies with the SDU requirements before April 1, 2000 the Secretary shall waive the alternative penalty. If a state qualifying for an alternative penalty complies with the SDU requirements on or after April 1, 2000, and on or before September 30, 2000, the alternative penalty amount will be 1 percent of the penalty base.

Not Losing TANF Funds

These alternative financial penalties will be in lieu of the state plan disapproval process and subsequent termination of all IV-D funds related to a state's failure to meet the deadlines for establishing an SDU. States that meet the conditions for the alternative penalty will not be in jeopardy of losing TANF funds.

For further information, contact OCSE's Sheck Chin at (202) 260-5830.□

Simone Krah is on assignment in OCSE's Policy Division.

Florida's Multi-State Financial Institution Data Match (MSFIDM)

By: Mike Ellis

Using multistate FIDM matches between August 27, 1999 and January 25, 2000, Florida has frozen 508 accounts totaling $634,589. These freezes have resulted in 432 levies being completed to date, with total collections of $567,632. Seventeen percent of the levy actions represent a first ever payment from the noncustodial parent; seven percent resulted in a wage withholding order being established; three percent of the actions have collected enough money to pay off and close the case; and just one percent have contested the filing and requested an Administrative or Circuit Court hearing.

While State officials are pleased with these numbers, the real success of the program is the difference it makes in the lives of families. For example, a recent MSFIDM collection brought in $52,180 from an obligor who owed $56,334. And because this was a nonpublic assistance case, the custodial parent received the entire amount.

The Multi-State FIDM program is clearly moving Florida closer to its goal of, "More Money, To More Children, More Quickly."□

Mike Ellis is Florida's FIDM Coordinator.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement
Division of Consumer Services
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Child Support Report

OCSE Web Update

OCSE's Web based National Electronic Child Support Resource System (NECSRS) currently contains federal and state resource documents representing contributions from 45 states. Topics include policy, training, best practices, and research, and NECSRS now provides users the ability to search, locate, view, print, and download these resources via the Internet.

New features and materials include:

- Best Practices/Good Ideas: to view the most recent state innovative practices;
- Advanced Search: to access documents more easily and quickly, there are now three ways to search documents; and
- Training Curricula: Processing Interstate Cases, PRWORA's Distribution Requirements, and the IV-D Management Development Training.

If you haven't used NECSRS lately, give it a try. Go to OCSE's web site on the Internet (www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse/), then click on the NECSRS Hyperlink.☐

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If you have enjoyed this issue of ***Child Support Report****, please pass it on to a co-worker or friend.*

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement Vol. XXII, No. 4, 2000

Defense Finance and Accounting Service Offers Electronic Option with Kids 1st Program

Wage Withholding Orders for Family Support through the Internet

By: Rod Winn

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service-Cleveland Center, Garnishment Operations Directorate (DFAS-CL/L) is responsible for the legal review and processing of child support and alimony orders for all DoD civilian and military personnel. With a volume of over 8,000 support orders each month, DFAS continues to identify and implement technology systems and enhancements that will benefit both DFAS and state child support customers.

DFAS-CL/L has implemented Electronic Commerce/Electronic Data Interchange (EC/EDI) as an option for agencies to submit support orders electronically; however, the volume of EC/EDI processes remains low at this time. To provide another option for state agencies to submit support orders electronically, DFAS has developed the capability of sending support orders over the Internet.

This option, called DFAS Kids 1st, is free to states. "Using the Internet to send support orders electronically," says OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross, "is a great way to reduce operating costs and improve service to our customers."

DFAS developed input screens for this option patterned after the standard child support form used by support caseworkers. The caseworkers enter data on these screens just as if they were creating a wage-withholding order using the standard child support forms.

The orders, sent over the Web and received at DFAS-Cleveland Garnishment office, will go directly to the electronic mail boxes of the paralegals responsible for processing support orders. This change will easily save 10-12 days in mail and processing times for implementing these orders.

> *"Using the Internet to send support orders electronically is a great way to reduce operating costs and improve service to our customers."*
>
> .....*OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross*

Under this option, support order information sent over the Web will meet the minimum requirements of the EDI 521 transaction set (income or asset offset) developed based on the standard child support form.

DFAS also is developing a batch process that can be used for states that have advanced automated systems. The batch process is an electronic means of capturing the data from those state systems that have electronic wage withholding in place.

The Garnishment Operations Directorate has a Trading Partner Agreement (TPA) for state agencies that intend to use this process. The TPA specifies that orders received from the agencies' authorized personnel will be considered valid orders; the agreement also establishes security authorizations that are required before the state agencies can submit support orders via the Web.

Each hour of the day, the information will pass

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Office of Child Support Enforcement

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Kids 1st

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through a highly secured network using an encryption process. The program also provides an automated notification process that the transaction was successfully transmitted to DFAS.

Benefits of the DFAS Kids 1st option include:

- Reduces processing time by eliminating mail handling;
- Decreases errors caused by manual data entry requirements;
- Reduces rejects almost to zero;
- Eliminates the need for state agencies to purchase expensive EDI software and Value Added Network (VAN) services. This can save thousands of dollars;
- Enables agencies to conform to standardized child support order mandates;
- Reduces postal and paper cost of using a hard copy order;
- Reduces paper processing for the support agency; and
- Decreases the time required for agencies to receive initial payments.

DFAS is anxious to share this technology with states. Again, it is free to states and DFAS personnel will be happy to visit your state to demonstrate the process. If you would like more information, call Rod Winn at (216) 522-5118 or DFAS Systems Chief Bonnie Walters at (216) 522-5435.□

Rod Winn is DFAS Assistant General Counsel for Garnishment Operations.

Military Issues in Child Support Enforcement

By: Marilyn A. Michaels

Dealing with a noncustodial parent who is in the military can present special challenges. Typical questions from state caseworkers include pay and garnishment issues, how to locate a military member, and how to get medical care for the child.

Pay and Garnishment

Federal employers do not have to vary their established pay and disbursement cycles in order to comply with support orders. Active duty military personnel are paid on the 1st and 15th of the month. In order to bring about changes to military pay, such as allotments and garnishments, the change action must be input to the account by an established cutoff date. If the action misses the cutoff date, it will not become effective until the following pay cycle.

All garnishment orders for members of the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines must be served on DFAS.

The military pay garnishment process is handled by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) in Cleveland, Ohio. All garnishment orders for members of the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines must be served on DFAS.

DFAS only transmits withheld pay during the first week of the month following the withholding of pay. To expedite the receipt of payment, caseworkers need to send garnishment orders in sufficient time for DFAS to review the order and input it prior to the 15th of the month.

If, for example, a caseworker mails an order by January 5th and DFAS processes it by January 10th, income is withheld from the military member's paychecks on the 15th of January and 1st of February. DFAS then will send the payment to the state agency in early February. But if the order is not received and processed by DFAS until January 20th, then the first withholding will not occur until February 15th, with the payment disbursed to the state in early March.

Locating A Military Person

Most requests for addresses of active duty military personnel must be submitted in writing to the individual service's worldwide locator system. The service member's Social Security number must be included. The locator service will send a unit address and the permanent duty station but not a street address.

If the person is stationed aboard a ship or overseas, he or she will have a box number and an FPO or APO address. The APO/FPO address will either be designated by AE (Europe/Middle East/Africa/Canada), AP (Pacific) or AA (Americas other than U.S. or Canada), plus a zip code.

If the member is on a deployment, information will have to be forwarded from the permanent duty station to the temporary unit. It may be necessary to call the base locator at the permanent duty station to get the phone number of the unit or of the member himself. A street address can then be obtained.

Continued on page 3, "Military."

Military

Continued from page 2

Medical Care

Medical care in the military is obtained through TRICARE, and a child must be enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) in order to be eligible to receive military medical care (this is in lieu of traditional medical insurance). If the child is a dependent of the service member, he or she is entitled to medical care; however, the dependency status must first be established.

If the military member is the father and the child was born out of wedlock, paternity must be judicially determined. If there is no judicial determination, and the child does not live in the sponsor's household, then the member must prove that the child is dependent upon him for over 50 percent of his or her support.

With all requirements met, the member can directly enroll the child in DEERS. If the noncustodial parent fails to do so, then the custodial parent may apply on behalf of the child. To initiate the process, the custodial parent usually will have to travel to the ID card-issuing section of the nearest military installation. He or she must bring appropriate documents to prove paternity/dependency and the military status of the sponsor. The application will be processed and the custodial parent will have to return at a later date for the issuance of an ID card for medical benefits for the child.

For more information, contact Marilyn Michaels at (808) 692-7139, or by e-mail at either mmichael@pixi.com or mmichaels@acf.dhhs.gov. □

Marilyn Michaels is OCSE's Military Liaison Officer.

New OCSE Military Liaison

Marilyn A. Michaels has recently joined OCSE as Military Liaison Officer. Lieutenant Colonel Michaels, USAF (Ret.) is on an assignment under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act arranged by the State of Hawaii. She will be working with the Special Initiatives Branch in the Division of State and Local Assistance. Her primary responsibilities are to engender cooperation among the military and in the Department of Defense for child support enforcement and to market child support enforcement to military personnel. She will coordinate and provide direction and guidance to our regional, state and local partners to resolve issues between U.S. military personnel and child support enforcement. □

Web-Based Training in Texas

By: Larry Acevedo

The Texas Attorney General's Child Support Division recently implemented a new large-scale training program, the Child Support Virtual University (CSVU). This program uses the Internet to augment agency PC and technical software training efforts. Over 200 self-study and instructor-led courses are available, including Excel 97, Access 97, WordPerfect 8.0, GroupWise 5.5, HTML, C++, Java, and UNIX.

The CSVU also contains a technical reference library with full electronic versions of books from leading technology publishers. And recently, Human Resources and Management Development courses have been added to the CSVU Course Catalog, including Managing Your Time, Coaching, Hiring, and Project Management.

Taking courses through CSVU enables staff to participate without leaving the office, thus avoiding travel expenses and minimizing lost time.

Taking courses through CSVU enables staff to participate without leaving the office, thus avoiding travel expenses and minimizing lost time. Students study at their own pace, which offers them an opportunity to incorporate the training course into their work schedules with minimal disruption.

Students participating in the CSVU program must have Internet access and access to a PC with speakers or headphones. Also, they must sign a registration form which includes "Principles of Participation" and must enroll in work related classes.

In less than three months, over 175 students have participated in courses and feedback has been positive. We anticipate greater usage of the CSVU program as staff become familiar with its ease of use and the variety of courses available.

Post-training class discussion forums, another feature of the training, create an interactive environment where students can discuss their post-training experiences online and simultaneously receive answers to their questions or problems.

Continued on page 6, "Web-Based."

Conference Calendar: 2000

April

12-14 *Mississippi CSE Association Ninth Annual Conference*, Bayview Spa and Resort, Biloxi, MS, Monty Simpkins (601) 965-1200.

26-28 *North Carolina 16th Annual CSE Conference*, Holiday Inn Four Seasons, Greensboro, NC, Cindy Wilson (704) 342-6325 X 264.

May

1-5 *Fifth Annual Bi-Regional Interstate Child Support Conference*, Site To Be Announced, Reno, NV, J.P. Soden (415) 437-8421.

3-5 *North Dakota Family Support 11th Annual Training Conference*, Doublewood Inn, Fargo, ND, Kathleen Ziegelmann (701) 241-5640 or Rosanne Robinson (303) 844-3100 X 394.

9-11 *California Family Support Council Quarterly Meeting*, Granlibakken Resort & Conference Center, Tahoe City, CA, Noanne St. Jean (559) 582-3211 X 2403.

21-24 *ACF Users' Group Meeting*, Galt House, Louisville, KY, Robin Rushton (202) 690-1244. State and Federal Staff Only.

21-25 *Eastern Regional Interstate Child Support Association*, Marriott Renaissance Center, Detroit, MI, John Graham (724) 830-3263.

June

4-7 *Colorado Annual Training Conference*, Vail Cascade Hotel and Club, Vail, CO, Ingrid Holmes (303) 271-8904.

11-14 *National Council of Child Support Directors Annual Conference and Business Meeting*, To Be Announced, Whitefish, MT, Mary Ann Wellbank (406) 444-3338.

12-14 *Indiana Child Support Alliance Annual Training Conference*, Indianapolis Marriott, Indianapolis, IN, Susan Schroeder (219) 449-7244.

18-21 *Southwest Regional CSE Association Annual Training Conference*, Sheraton in Old Town, Albuquerque, NM, Myrna Vigil or Frank Murray (505) 476-7040.

July

18-20 *South Dakota Annual Child Support Investigator Conference*, Brookings Inn, Brookings, SD, Carmin Sommer (605) 773-3641.

26-28 *California Family Support Council Quarterly Meeting*, Town & Country Hotel & Convention Center, San Diego, CA, Noanne St. Jean (559) 582-3211 X 2403.

30 – **August** 3 *NCSEA 49th Annual Conference*, Town and Country Resort, San Diego CA, Tara McFarlane (202) 624-8180. □

New Hire Data Helps Utah Recover Student Loans

By: Bill Starks

Welfare reform requires each state to collect information from employers on all newly hired employees. The information obtained is used to locate parents who have a child support obligation and to assist in the collection of overdue payments. The law also allows state agencies to use the new hire data to determine eligibility and to detect possible fraud in other state assistance programs.

In June 1998, the Utah Unemployment Insurance (UI) program began using data collected for the State's New Hire Registry to identify individuals who might be committing UI benefits fraud. The Benefit Payment Control (BPC) unit of the UI program now conducts a daily cross match between the State New Hire Registry and UI benefit recipients to identify individuals who have returned to work but are still receiving benefits. Individuals identified by this cross match system are referred for investigation of potential benefit fraud under provisions of State law that limit earnings while one is receiving UI benefits.

From June 1998 through January 1999, the New Hire Registry cross match program identified 173 individuals who fraudulently received $148,939 in benefits while working. The $861 average overpayment amount detected by the New Hire Registry cross match is 43 percent lower than the $1,513 average overpayment detected using all other fraud detection methods during the same period.

A lower average overpayment means that the fraud has been detected earlier; new hire data is fresher than quarterly wage data, historically used by UI programs to detect fraud. Using the New Hire cross match system saved the Utah Unemployment Benefit Trust Fund an estimated $115,000 during the June 1998 to January 1999 period.

Next, Utah began a review of its State student loan program. One year after the Utah State Legislature passed legislation setting up the New Hire Registry, it passed legislation allowing the Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority (UHEAA), a branch of the State's Office of Higher Education, to receive employment information from the Department of Workforce Services (DWS). UHEAA intended to use this employment information to collect on defaulted student loans. As the guarantor of

Continued on page 5, "Utah."

Utah Student Loan Cross Match Results

Month 1999	Clean matches		Matches w/exceptions		Clean match %	No match	Repeat* employers
Total	AWG** dollars collected						
April	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	$51,742.14
May	2,638	275	56%	1,833	N/a	N/a	$66,545.37
June	4,130	499	44%	N/a	N/a	9,368	$66,697.42
July	115	53	6%	1,749	104	2,021	83,876.41
August	157	79	6%	1,758	554	2,548	114,804.15
September	699	275	10%	4,452	1,813	7,239	120,492.61
October	143	112	5%	1,674	838	2,767	104,985.08
November	240	114	8%	1,700	1,121	3,175	120,225.29
December	999	308	13%	4,087	2,358	7,752	
Total							**728,478.47**

*"Repeat employers" refers to employers who were previously identified as being the employer for the student loan defaulter; in other words, these are not new hits.

**"AWG" stands for administrative wage garnishment.

[Note: There is normally a 45- to 60-day lag from when employer matches are received and when actual income withholding revenue is realized.]

Utah

Continued from page 4

these funds, the UHEAA was interested in locating persons who had obtained student loans but failed to repay them.

In the spring of 1999, the UHEAA began sending a list of its student loan defaulters to DWS. The DWS compared the student loan default list to its new hire database and then (if no matches were detected) to its UI wage database. The result: more than 50 percent of the individuals on the student loan default list were found to be working.

Through the use of administrative wage garnishment, the UHEAA collected more than $728,000 in just the first seven months of the program.

As the above table indicates, for the first month of the cross match (May 1999) there was a 56 percent match rate between individuals (the "clean matches") who had defaulted on their student loans but who were now working. Through the use of administrative wage garnishment, the UHEAA collected more than $728,000 in just the first seven months of the program.

Many other states are now using new hire data to improve state programs. Close to half the states, for example, run cross matches between their state new hire data and their unemployment insurance benefit claims data.

Congress has passed legislation mandating the use of new hire data to help collect debts owed on defaulted student loans or to recover overpayments of grants. The Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2000, signed by President Clinton in November 1999, includes language allowing the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to run a cross match at the federal level between new hire data and data on defaulted student loans for the purpose of collection of debt from those whose income exceeds $16,000 per year.

At the State level, Utah is already benefiting from its own new hire/student loan cross match, which could become a model for other states looking to reduce fraud and re-coup expenditures in another state program.

For more information contact David Shore at (801) 526-4366.□

Bill Starks is the former Manager of Utah's New Hire Registry.

OCSE Announces Management Course

By: Jack Shaw

OCSE recently announced the availability of *Management Development Training for IV-D Directors and Executive Staff.* This pilot-tested course, now available through the agency's National Electronic Child Support Resources System, provides new state child support directors and executive staff information and tools to help them manage their child support enforcement programs. The course was developed by OCSE's National Training Center (NTC), with input from state and local partners and the National Council of Child Support Directors.

Offered in six modules, the course provides an orientation to child support enforcement and practical guidance in five more subject areas: partnering, systems technology, strategic planning, financial management, and privatization. The training can be provided either on an individual module basis or as a complete course, depending on participant needs. The modules are designed to encourage interaction among participants based on their varying levels of experience.

Where there is interest, NTC plans to offer the course on a region-wide basis. For those who wish to develop their own state-specific training course, the curriculum, including PowerPoint presentations and handouts, is available as "zipped files" for easy download from the OCSE Web site.

For more information on *Management Development Training for IV-D Directors and Executive Staff,* contact Jack Shaw at (202) 401-5144.□

Jack Shaw is a Program Specialist/Trainer in OCSE's National Training Center.

Leadership Course Planned

OCSE's National Training Center has begun work on a leadership course for child support directors and executives. *Leadership for IV-D Directors and Executive Staff* will draw on academic studies of leadership, "best practices" of corporate and government leaders, and behavior models to demonstrate the tenets of successful leadership. The course will feature interactive discussion forums and child support case studies. For more information, contact Jack Shaw at (202) 401-5144.□

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SEPTEMBER 25-27, 2000

Contact Bertha Hammett at OCSE's National Training Center for additional information: (202) 401-5292 or bhammett@acf.dhhs.gov

Web-Based

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The forum is like an electronic bulletin board where students can ask questions and contribute to discussions while subject matter experts provide answers and solutions. Comments and responses are posted immediately and the discussion information stays online for future reference. If users cannot stay on line, they still can ask questions and request that replies be sent to them by e-mail.

Forums have moderators who can delete or move messages to keep a discussion organized, open new topics, delete old ones, and close a forum to further discussion, leaving it available as read-only. In the few months that the forums have been available, users have enjoyed the interactive sessions and found them to be a useful and cost effective training resource for the agency.

For more information, contact Larry Acevedo at (512)620-6220.□

Larry Acevedo is a Training Manager in the Procedures and Training Section of the Child Support Division of the Office of the Attorney General of Texas.

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OCSE Executive Staff

Over the past year, there have been a number of changes in OCSE's executive-level staffing–in some cases new people have joined us; in others, familiar faces have moved to new responsibilities.

Shown above from left to right, first row, are: **David Siegel**, Director, Division of Consumer Services; **Keith Bassett,** Director, Division of Audit; **Donna Bonar,** Acting Associate Commissioner for Automation and Program Operations; **Frank Fuentes,** Deputy Commissioner; **David Gray Ross,** Commissioner; **Paul Legler,** Assistant Commissioner; **James Colarusso,** Chief of Staff; **Elizabeth (Lily) Matheson,** Director, Division of Policy and Planning; **Maiso Bryant,** Director, Office of Grants Management.

From left to right, back row: **Jannice Butler,** Staff Coordinator; **Tony Hardy,** Acting Director, Division of Federal Systems; **Harold Staten,** Director, Division of Management Services; **Robin Rushton,** Director, Division of State Systems; **Michelle Jefferson,** Director, Division of State and Local Assistance; **Joe Lonergan,** Director, Office of Mandatory Grants; **Lionel J. Adams,** Director, Office of Special Staffs; **Nicholas H. Soppa,** Confidential Assistant to the Commissioner; **Eileen McDaniel,** Executive Assistant to the Commissioner.□

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Office of Child Support Enforcement
Division of Consumer Services
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Child Support Report

Executive Director Named for Asian American/Pacific Islander Initiative

Shamina Singh has been named the first executive director of the White House Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI). "We are pleased that HHS has been made the lead agency for this important initiative and that Ms. Singh will head our effort," said HHS Deputy Secretary Kevin Thurm.

The initiative calls for a coordinated Federal Government-wide effort to improve the quality of life of AAPI persons in areas where they may be underserved. It will address AAPI concerns in a variety of areas, from health to education, housing, labor, and economic and community development.

Persons of AAPI descent currently make up about 3 percent of the U.S. population, with most residing in California. Other states with significant AAPI populations a re New York, Hawaii, Texas, and New Jersey. According to Census Bureau data, AAPI persons make up 14.6 percent of individuals in poverty and 12.4 percent of families in poverty (1995 and 1996 data). In addition, some 15.8 percent of AAPI children are not covered by health insurance (1996 data).☐

Child Support Report
Vol. XXII No. 4
April 2000

Child Support Report is a publication of the Office of Child Support Enforcement, Division of Consumer Services.

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Vol. XXII, No. 5, May 2000

Updated Systems Certification Guidance for States

By: Robin Rushton

To assist states in preparing for PRWORA certification reviews, OCSE has issued updates to the *Automated Systems for Child Support Enforcement: A Guide for States*, commonly referred to as the *PRWORA Certification Guide*. Also, the agency has issued a new release, version 1.03, for the Financial Distribution Test Deck Generator.

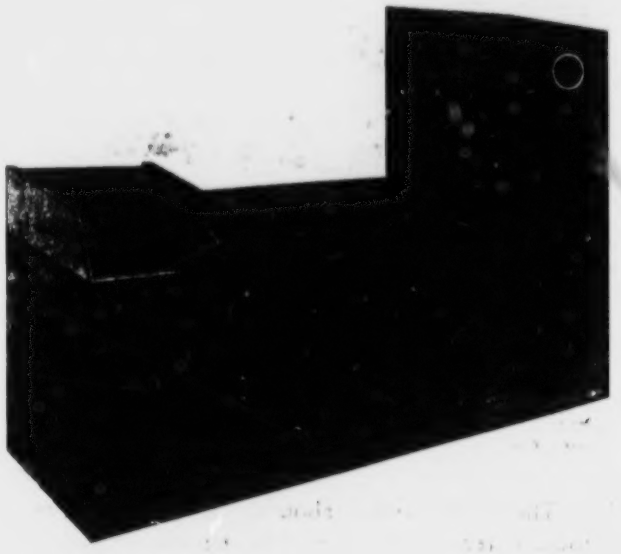
PRWORA Certification Guide

OCSE Action Transmittal 99-16 updates the March 1999 *Certification Guide* by:

- Providing corrections and clarifications to the certification objectives;
- Updating Appendix A;
- Providing a new Appendix B that contains guidance for states in updating their certification questionnaire for PRWORA; and
- Providing a new Appendix C that contains a checklist of PRWORA requirements.

The *Guide* defines the minimum functionality required of a child support automated system and establishes the certification criteria for states' use in meeting all Title IV-D requirements as prescribed by the Family Support Act of 1988 (FSA 88), PRWORA, and implementing regulations. Program and system regulations form the foundation of the *Guide*.

A primary change to the *Certification Guide* is that, in addition to conducting functional reviews and Level I (pilot) and Level II (statewide) certification reviews, OCSE



Major Changes to PRWORA Certification Objectives

Review and Adjustment updated to reflect regulatory changes in OCSE AT-99-01;

Uploading of FIPS Code clarified to permit use of Automated IRG on the Internet;

Wage Withholding updated to reflect notices to employer and noncustodial parent and to remove some tracking of timeframes;

Medical Support notice deleted until proposed regulation finalized;

Administrative Enforcement of Interstate deleted until pilot and data specifications finalized; and

State Disbursement Unit customer service requirement deleted as an automation requirement.□

Continued on page 7, "Systems."

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PS 029106

U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement

My View

David Gray Ross

Those of you who have followed developments in child support over the past seven years in which I have been Commissioner of OCSE know that we have made a major effort to build coalitions in pursuit of the common goal of "Children First." This effort has, I believe, brought about a beneficial change in the culture of OCSE and the nation's child support community. Our openness has paid dividends in the success of child support during these years.

The great majority—about 85 percent—of our custodial parents are mothers. The standard of living of a woman with custody of children is generally reduced following a divorce, and never-married women with children have a particularly difficult time of it financially.

For many mothers and their children, child support is a significant source of income that can help them become self-sufficient. All families headed by mothers have to struggle much harder than two-parent families to make ends meet. Child support can and does make a real difference to them in managing food, shelter, clothing, medical, dental, and other expenses.

During this Mothers Day season, let's take a moment to recognize and honor those women who have to shoulder the responsibilities of both parents. Many of them are doing an outstanding job in very demanding circumstances, and we need to remind ourselves of that from time to time.

More than that, however, it's imperative for every one of us in child support to do his or her best each day on behalf of these families. They count on us.

Happy Mothers Day to all.□

Women in the United States: A Profile

Most single female custodial parents had child support awards

In the spring of 1996, 11.6 million, or 85 percent, of the 13.7 million custodial parents were women. Eight million, or 58 percent, of all custodial parents had child support awards—61 percent for mothers and 40 percent for fathers. In 1995, 70 percent of mothers due payments actually received at least a portion of the amount they were owed, getting an average of $3,767 that year. The corresponding figures for fathers were 57 percent and $3,370, respectively. Nonetheless, 33.3 percent of custodial mothers and 14.3 percent of custodial fathers were poor in 1995.

Women outnumber men

In March 1999, the civilian noninstitutional population of the United States totaled approximately 272 million—139 million female and 133 million male. At the younger ages (under 20 years), the male-female ratio was 105 to 100, but for the ages of 20-44, it was 98 to 100. This ratio continues to decline with age, reaching 49 men to 100 women at the ages of 85 and over.

Women are marrying later

In 1998, the median age at first marriage for women was 25.0 years. Just a generation ago, in 1970, the age of first marriage was 20.8 years. The median age at first marriage for men was 26.7 years in 1998, up from 23.2 years in 1970.

Women still earn less than men

The median earnings of women 25 years and over who worked full-time, year-round in 1998 were $26,711, 73 percent of their male counterparts' median earnings of $36,679.

The median earnings of women with a high school diploma were $21,963, compared with $30,868 for their male counterparts;

The median earnings of women with a bachelor's degree were $35,408, compared with $49,982 for their male counterparts.□

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, March, 2000.

Technology-Based Training Tested in Seattle Region

By: David Thomas

Recently, the Region X (Seattle) Office of Child Support invited participants from Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington State to attend the Graduate School, USDA course, Instructional System Design for Technology-Based Training (TBT). (See the December '99 *CSR* for more information on TBT.)

This training provides the knowledge necessary to design a course for delivery in a technology-based format, such as CD-ROM (CBT) or the Web (WBT). Structured to provide an understanding of TBT design principles as well as "how to," the course is recommended for trainers, designers, and programmers alike.

This training provides the knowledge necessary to design a course for delivery in a technology-based format, such as CD-ROM or the Web.

Participants had opportunities to work on real-life training projects they brought with them. First, they learned to evaluate whether technology-based training fit their needs. Then, working in groups, they designed the flow, navigation, and overall look of the course. Finally, they produced storyboards, developed criteria for analyzing course effectiveness, and created an implementation plan.

Comments indicated that all state participants saw uses for this type of training in their respective offices, where new employees need basic informational training. Newly hired employees, or employees transferred from other offices, often find it inconvenient to wait until there are enough people to arrange for group training. And sometimes the location of offices in a state makes group training impractical. TBT overcomes these obstacles by allowing individuals to train at their desks and at their own pace and convenience.

For more information, contact David Thomas at (206) 615-2550 X 3111.□

David Thomas is a Program Analyst in OCSE's Seattle Regional Office.

CBT Courses To Be Put on OCSE Web

OCSE's six computer-based training (CBT) modules (Orientation, Locate, Paternity Establishment, Enforcement Remedies, Interstate, and Distribution) are another enhancement of the agency's overall Web presence. The courses have received positive feedback from users and child support agencies across the country. The Orientation course recently received a Multimedia and Internet Training Award in a national competition sponsored by Brandon Hall (see January, 2000 *CSR*).

To make its CBT training courses even more useful, OCSE is working with the USDA Graduate School to convert the course CD-ROMS to Web-based training. Web-based training offers several advantages over CD-Roms, providing "anytime anywhere just-in-time just enough training" for the user without the necessity for a CD-ROM drive. Also, Web-based training can easily be updated if and when needed (e.g., when laws change), while CD-ROMS are permanent and must be totally redone if changes are needed.

The Interstate and Orientation courses are expected to be available as Web-based training during fiscal year 2000. Interstate has been recently converted and is already on the OCSE Web site. Orientation, in the beginning stages of conversion, is scheduled for completion by late summer. OCSE plans to convert the remaining four courses in FY 2001. For more information, call Charlene Butler at (202) 401-5091.□

OMB NO.: 0970-0154
EXPIRATION DATE: 12/31/00

ORDER/NOTICE TO WITHHOLD INCOME FOR CHILD SUPPORT

State _____
Co./City/Dist. of _____
Date of Order/Notice _____
Court/Case Number _____

_____ Original Order/Notice
_____ Amended Order/Notice
_____ Terminate Order/Notice

_____
Employer/Withholder's Federal EIN Number

_____
Employer/Withholder's Name

_____
Employer/Withholder's Address

_____

_____

_____

RE: * _____
Employee/Obligor's Name (Last, First, MI)

* _____
Employee/Obligor's Social Security Number

* _____
Employee/Obligor's Case Identifier

_____
Custodial Parent's Name (Last, First, MI)

Child(ren)'s Name(s): **DOB**

Child(ren)'s Name(s): **DOB**

ORDER INFORMATION: This is an Order/Notice to Withhold Income for Child Support based upon an order for support from _____. By law, you are required to deduct these amounts from the above-named employee's/obligor's income until _____ even if the Order/Notice is not issued by your State.

States' Use of Standardized Income Withholding Form Helps Employers

In 1997, the Federal Government published a standardized form called "Order/Notice to Withhold Income for Child Support." Its use is mandated by 42 USC 666(a)(8)(B) for "all child support orders which are initially issued in the State on or after January 1, 1994."

Employers have the responsibility to implement any income withholding order that appears "regular on its face." Since employers recognize the standardized form and understand its terms, its use can assist in their determination of validity and eliminate delays.

The form contains standardized data elements that help the employer deduct child and medical support payments more efficiently. Specifically, the form tells the employer:

- When the withholding must begin;
- How much is to be withheld;
- What the withholding is for (current support, past-due support, medical expenses, cost and fees including attorney fees);
- How to remit payments;
- Where to remit payments; and
- What to do in the event the employee terminates employment.

When using this form, be sure to include a phone number where you can be reached and be prepared to answer any questions the employer may have. The form can be obtained from OCSE's web site: http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse/pol/at-9803.htm.

Should you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact one of the individuals listed below:

Carol Callahan
OCSE
Employer Service (202) 401-6969
ccallahan@acf.dhhs.gov

Michael O'Toole
American Payroll Association
(212) 686-2030
motoole@amercianpayroll.org

Laura Morgan
American Bar Association
(804) 817-6574
goddess@supportguidelines.com.□

South Carolina Evaluates "First Things First" Media Campaign

Students say, "Give Us More Information."

By: Kathy Brazell

South Carolina's "First Things First" (FTF) public awareness media campaign, created by the Child Support Enforcement Division (CSED) of the Department of Social Services, hopes to change the attitudes of young people about childbearing. The main message: an education, job, and marriage should precede having children.

(See the December '99 *CSR* for a report on earlier aspects of this campaign, including a baseline survey of students and parents.)

Designed to help children set goals, the campaign consists of television commercials and educational materials distributed to schools. This article will concentrate on the evaluation of two television ads that aired across South Carolina during the summer months of 1999.

The two commercials—each 30 seconds in length and targeted to young people aged 11 to 20—were the focal point of the campaign. One used animation to show that a baby needs to be cared for 24 hours a day. The second showed the Governor of South Carolina, his wife, and a group of children talking about FTF.

After the airing of the commercials, a local consulting firm conducted a follow up evaluation designed to measure the campaign's effectiveness in changing perceptions and attitudes.

The evaluation provided information about the extent to which the media campaign had been successful in reaching its target audience. It consisted of a self-administered survey with over 200 middle-school students (nearly half of whom lived in two-parent homes) and a mail survey with 400 parents.

Forty percent of the students had already seen the FTF television commercials, and about half of this group indicated they had discussed them with their parents. As part of the evaluation, however, all students were shown the ads.

Though both commercials were well liked by the students, the animated ad was slightly better liked. One reason appears to be that it offers information rather than advice. For example, it tells viewers the average number of diapers a baby needs in the first year of life.

Students appreciated the honesty of the message, and open-ended comments suggest that the reality of raising a baby was not something commonly discussed with them. Students suggested that future ads might include pregnant teenagers or teen mothers, as they would lend a sense of realism to the ad.

Differences were found among students' reactions depending on age and gender. Younger students (6th graders) were more likely than older ones to agree with FTF statements. Also, girls tended to agree with the campaign's message more strongly than boys. Boys were more likely to agree with the statement that it is "okay to start a family before you finish school." Girls also agreed more strongly with the statement that their "parents talk to them about the difficulties teenage parents face."

Parents also considered the media ads effective, and more than half of the parents who had seen the ads stated that they talked to their child about the FTF message.

An important lesson learned from this campaign is that, while parents do talk with their children about the importance of an education, a job, and marriage before starting a family, they would like more information and help in discussing these tough issues with their children. The evaluation also shows that while mothers and teachers strongly influence students' decisions in these areas, the students, too, need more, and more realistic, information about what it means to be a teen parent.

For the campaign as a whole, the evaluation revealed that television commercials, while effective, need to be aired repeatedly in order to be recalled by the audience. A more efficient method of reaching students, especially younger ones, might be through educational materials in schools and through teachers, who are, with parents, a source of trusted advice.

CSED plans to continue this campaign with additional television and radio commercials, billboard advertising, and continued presentations in schools and other organizations.

For further information about the First Things First media campaign and the results of the study, contact Kathy Brazell at (803) 898-9338. □

Kathy Brazell is Project Administrator for the Child Support Enforcement Division of the South Carolina Department of Social Services.

MSFIDM in Massachusetts

By: Diana P. Obbard

In January 1993, the Child Support Enforcement Division (CSED) of the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) implemented a successful automated in-State bank levy program. Levying the accounts of noncustodial parents in Massachusetts' financial institutions for the past seven years has resulted in collections of $30 million in past-due child support.

Until the advent of the Multistate Financial Institution Data Match (MSFIDM), DOR could not levy out-of-state bank accounts. Recently, DOR started putting MSFIDM information to use by sending levy notices directly to financial institutions in other states.

For example, based on MSFIDM information received from OCSE, Massachusetts' CSED sent levies directly to a North Carolina bank, with the following results:

- One custodial parent was owed more than $11,000 for her 15-year-old twin daughters and a seven-year-old son. It had been more than two years since the noncustodial parent, now living in Georgia, had sent any child support payments. The North Carolina bank remitted $11,709, satisfying the debt in full.
- A second custodial parent was owed $5,514 in unpaid child support for her 17-year-old son and 15-year-old daughter. Even though the noncustodial parent had been paying his weekly order plus 25 percent on arrears, it would have taken over eight years for the arrears to be paid. The North Carolina bank remitted the entire amount.

In another case, the noncustodial parent lived in Florida, had a bank account in Virginia, and owed a total of $18,501 to the custodial parent and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Each week, DOR received $60.00, which met the current obligation but did nothing to reduce arrears. When the noncustodial parent received a copy of the Massachusetts Direct Levy, he immediately contacted the Department of Revenue's Customer Service Bureau and paid the arrears in full.

Thanks to MSFIDM, state child support enforcement agencies now have the ability to locate and levy funds owed for child support when the money is in a bank account in another state.

For additional information, call Erik Kirby at (617) 626-4224 or Brad Kramer at (617) 626-4161.□

Diana Obbard is the Director of Project Development for Massachusetts.

Ad Council Campaign Update

By: Rob Cohen

The Parental Responsibility Public Service Announcement Campaign, developed through a unique public-private partnership of HHS OCSE, the States of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana and Maryland, The Advertising Council, and the ad agency Ogilvy and Mather, speaks to the importance of fathers to their children. ("They're Your Kids, Be Their Dad," April '99 *CSR*). For the period of January-December 1999, total media support for this national multimedia Campaign had an estimated valued of $31.8 million.

Radio provided the greatest support, accounting for about 59 percent of the total media support received, with the 60-second spot "The Girl" receiving the most play. Television accounted for almost 36 percent of total support received, with the 30-second spot "The Boy" leading the way.

Support was spread throughout the nation. By dollar value, it was greatest in the following metropolitan areas: Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Wichita, Houston, Cleveland, Hartford/New Haven, and Orlando.

Transit boards contributed about three percent of the support received. While newspapers accounted for just one percent of the total media support, the New York Post provided major support for the campaign in the 4th Quarter of 1999.

The partners are gearing up for the next phase of the Campaign. As we receive further information, we will pass it on to you. If you would like to learn more about the Ad Council Campaign, contact Rob Cohen at (202) 401-9373.□

Rob Cohen is Deputy Director of OCSE's Division of Consumer Services.

Certification Continues

Certification of the systems of the District of Columbia, North Dakota, and Kansas brings to 46 the total number of states whose automated systems have received certification.□

Systems

Continued from page 1.

will conduct incremental certification reviews. If OCSE determines that the functionality for specific objectives has been met, it will be noted on a checklist that is part of Appendix C of the *PRWORA Certification Guide*. ACF reserves the right to re-review any PRWORA or FSA 88 function during any subsequent review.

Another change is that Appendix B now provides more guidance to the states regarding the type of information that is being sought in the PRWORA Questionnaire. The revised *Guide* can be found on the Internet at: www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse/.

Appendix B now provides more guidance to the states regarding the type of information that is being sought in the PRWORA Questionnaire.

Questions and responses on certification or functional requirements can be found on the OCSE web site at www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse/stsys/qanda.htm.

Financial Distribution Test Deck Generator

An updated revision of the PRWORA Financial Distribution Test Deck Generator (FDTDG), Version 1.03, is now available. The OSCE FDTDG was developed to assist states in assessing processing compliance with the new PRWORA guidelines. This version of the FDTDG does not change any of the distribution scenarios but adds features to the help screen, such as:

- The ability to directly print the state policy option election pages from within the test deck, independent of printing any scenarios. The policy elections pages also will still be printed whenever any scenario is selected for printing;
- The latest version of the OCSE 34-A report format, which has been incorporated into the Test Deck along with the Report's instructions; and
- The test deck help system within version 1.03, which also contains new reference materials that were published after its initial release. The specific documents are: AT 99-10, 99-01, 98-26, 98-24, 98-17, 98-15, and PIQ 99-03.

The FDTDG release did not change the distribution scenarios. States that used earlier versions to assist in programming and testing will not be adversely affected. Updated versions of release 1.03 have been mailed to every individual who had requested a copy of the earlier versions.

If you would like more information or need additional copies of the OCSE FDTDG, you may call Mandar Kulkarni at (703) 345-8107 or e-mail your request to mandar.kulkarni@trw.com. Please specify whether you want CD-ROM or diskettes.□

Robin Rushton is Director, Division of State Systems, OCSE.

Robert Doar Honored

Robert Doar, Deputy Commissioner of the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance and Director of Child Support Enforcement, has been honored by the American Society for Public Administration with ASPA's New Public Administrator Award. This award is presented in recognition of outstanding individual service and initiative which has exemplified superior management and administration within New York State by an individual with less than 10 years experience in public administration.

New York Governor George E. Pataki congratulated Mr. Doar, citing him as a "tremendous asset to this administration," and a leader who "represents the highest ideals of public service."

Mr. Doar has been New York's Child Support Director since November 1995. Since his appointment, he has been responsible for implementing numerous changes in New York's Child Support Program to improve service to customers. In addition to directing the statewide implementation of the driver's license suspension program, Mr. Doar oversaw the setting up of the statewide New Hire Directory and the establishment of a partnership with the State Department of Taxation and Finance for the collection of child support.□

Expanded FPLS Social Security Number Matches Top Three Million

From October 1, 1998 to March 31, 2000, there were 3,506,283 unduplicated SSNs matched through the expanded Federal Parent Locator Service. Locating sources were Quarterly Wage Data, W4, and Unemployment Insurance.□

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Evaluation Report of Child Support, Child Care, and Head Start Collaboration Projects Available on Internet

In 1997, OCSE awarded grants to six States — Alaska, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota and Missouri — to develop models of collaboration between the Child Support Enforcement, Head Start, and Child Care Programs. The three-year projects were to promote and facilitate access to Child Support services through local Child Care and Head Start centers and to generate a broader understanding of child support and parenting issues within the three programs.

OCSE also funded an evaluation study of the implementation process of these projects, and the report of the study is now available on the Internet. Entitled, *Getting Off the Ground: Early Implementation Findings About Child Support Enforcement, Head Start and Child Care Collaboration Demonstrations*, it may be found by first going to www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse/prgrpt.htm, then to the drop-down box on that page to find the report. Then hit the "go" button. ☐

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Vol. XXIII, No. 6, June 2000

HHS Child Support Demonstration Waivers to Help Promote Responsible Fatherhood

$15 Million in combined federal and private funding over 3 years

HHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala recently announced the approval of waiver demonstrations for 10 states to improve the opportunities of young, unmarried fathers to support their children both financially and emotionally.

The demonstrations, in Baltimore, Maryland; Boston, Massachusetts; Chester County, Pennsylvania; Chicago, Illinois; Denver, Colorado; Indianapolis, Indiana; Los Angeles, California; Milwaukee/Racine, Wisconsin; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and New York City, New York, will total $15 million in combined federal and private funding over a three-year period. There will be an independent evaluation of the demonstration sites.

The projects will test new ways for state-run child support enforcement programs and community-based organizations . . . to work together.

The projects will test new ways for state-run child support enforcement programs and community-based organizations, including faith-based organizations, to work together to help young fathers obtain employment, make child support payments and learn parenting skills.

"These demonstration projects will reveal innovative new strategies to help low-income, unmarried mothers and fathers work together for their child's good," said Secretary Shalala.

HHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala

"Being a good father demands skill, patience, dedication and hard work," added OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross. "These projects," he continued, "will help us understand what works best for young fathers and can help them improve the life prospects of their children."

The projects will focus on serving young, never-married, non-custodial parents who do not have a child support court order in place and may face obstacles to employment.

Some of the projects will provide direct services for

Continued on page 7, "Waivers."

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U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement

Excerpts from Assistant Secretary's Congressional Testimony

Assistant Secretary for Children and Families Olivia A. Golden recently testified before Congress on the Child Support Enforcement Program. Here are excerpts from her testimony.

Record Collections and Paternity Establishments in Fiscal Year 1999

In FY 1999, a record of nearly $16 billion in child support was collected—double the amount collected in 1992. The number of paternities established or acknowledged reached a record 1.5 million, almost tripling the 1992 figure. Of these, over 614,000 paternities were established through in-hospital acknowledgement programs.

The Importance of Child Support As Families Move Toward Self-sufficiency

I am hearing from more and more families on the importance of child support in ensuring their children's future success.

I am hearing from more and more families on the importance of child support in ensuring their children's future success. . . .

The face of welfare is changing. More families receiving assistance are working, and the assistance they receive is more temporary in nature. An ongoing and continued link between child support and family income is crucial in stabilizing their lives and preparing for self-sufficiency. . . .

We want to maximize the amount of child support available to a family leaving welfare in order to ensure that they have every opportunity to become self-sufficient. . . .

Like Medicaid and child care, regular child support can be a key part of moving into stable work for a single-parent family. As studies have shown, having child support securely in place helps in a successful transition from welfare. □

St. Paul Dad Honored

By: Molly Crawford

Personal success with help from Parents' Fair Share earned Carlos Rosas, a 33-year-old noncustodial father from St. Paul, Minnesota, accolades from the White House. During the State of the Union Address in January, President Clinton recognized Rosas (who had met the President at a January 1999 press conference on welfare-to-work and fatherhood initiatives) for overcoming financial problems and continuing to pay child support.

More recently, Rosas and members of his extended family met with the President and the Mayor of Mineapolis, Sharon Sayles Belton, during the President's visit to Minneapolis.

Rosas found emotional, education, and career support through Parents' Fair Share, a program that seeks to increase noncustodial parents' earnings and living standards and to translate those earnings into increased child support payments. He paid support for his son until he was laid off in 1996. "Even though I was still involved in Ricky's life, I couldn't pay," he said.

When he became concerned about his growing arrears balance, Rosas responded to mailings he received about Parents' Fair Share. Kristen Schuldt, a Ramsey County child support enforcement agent working with Parents' Fair Share, said most of the men she works with are trying to do the right thing. "Through Parents' Fair Share, they get the help they need to turn their lives around," said Schuldt. "Everyone benefits."

Workshops and other program support helped Rosas get into St. Paul Technical College, pay tuition, and pursue his interest in electronics. He graduated last spring and found work repairing office machines. He now pays support according to state guidelines, as well as arrears payments. "Anybody can do what I did," he said. "Parents' Fair Share has done so much for fathers." □

[Excerpted with permission from the *Child Support Quarterly*. Winter 2000. The *Quarterly* is a publication of the Minnesota Child Support Program.]

Molly Crawford is the Editor of the Child Support Quarterly.

The Difference A Dad Can Make

By: Martha Farrell Erickson, Ph.D.

Father and son.

The benefits of father involvement are well-documented. At the most basic level, the father's presence in the home yields significant economic benefits for all family members; but just being present is not enough. Fathers are an important source of nurturance and emotional security for their infants, as well as a critical source of support for the mother-infant attachment.

For the fathers themselves, caring for a child is a transforming experience that often leads to personal growth, motivation and, in turn, improved economic security. As children grow, their fathers' active engagement in their lives enhances their chances for academic success, a healthy gender identify, clear values and moral development, and ultimately greater success in both family and work.

Although it's easy to imagine the importance of a father in the life of a growing son, daughters also benefit enormously from a close, loving relationship with their father. Their academic achievement and later intimate relationships speak strongly of their fathers' role in their lives.

A mother and father actively parenting together is the strongest predictor of positive outcomes for children.

Some who tout the importance of fathers would prescribe certain tasks and roles for fathers as necessarily distinct from the tasks of mothers (e.g., mother as nurturer, father as disciplinarian and moral guide). But there is more rhetoric than data to support that notion.

Research suggests that it's not so critical exactly how a mother and father divide the specific tasks of parenting, but that they cooperate in figuring out what works for them and their children. In fact, a mother and father actively parenting together is the strongest predictor of positive outcomes for children.

Most likely to succeed on all fronts are the children whose parents are married and living together in relative harmony. And in cases of divorce, children do best when parents can set aside the conflicts that eroded the marriage and agree to work together as co-parents.□

[Excerpted with permission from "Research confirms what dads and kids tell us," by Martha Farrell Erickson, Ph.D., in *Seeds of Promise,* Fall, 1999, a publication of the Children, Youth & Family Consortium, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55108.]

Martha Farrell Erickson, Ph.D., is Director of the University of Minnesota's Children, Youth & Family Consortium and co-chair of the national board of Father to Father.

Good Parenting, Regardless of Gender

What constitutes good parenting regardless of gender?

Research points to key features of good parenting, regardless of gender: unwavering love; sensitivity to the child's needs and feelings; clear and consistent limits geared to the child's stage of development; firm but not harsh discipline; encouragement of the child's emerging independence; involvement in the child's education; and, perhaps above all, a living example of respect for self and others.

Although many fine single parents embody these qualities and valiantly raise their children to healthy adulthood, blessed is the child who has two parents working together to provide all of these things.□

[From Erickson, "Research confirms . . ." in *Seeds of Promise.*]

SIP Grant Updates

Special Improvement Project (SIP) grants awarded by OCSE are not limited to state child support enforcement agencies (as are, for example, section 1115 research and demonstration grants). SIP grants may also be awarded to local agencies, tribal groups, nonprofit organizations, and other groups that meet the grant program's eligibility requirements. This is the first in a series of updates of state SIP grants.

California Paternity Establishment/Statewide Paternity Opportunity Program Imaging and Data Access

The primary goal of California's SIP grant is to establish a streamlined process for filing, electronically imaging, and providing access to completed paternity declarations to address the heavy volume of more than 120,000 paternity declarations being filed annually in California. The initial effort was focused on eliminating a backlog of more than 80,000 unprocessed paternity declarations that had accumulated at the State vital statistics agency, so this responsibility could be permanently transferred to California's child support agency.

Results

- Eliminated a backlog of 80,000 unprocessed paternity declarations;
- Converted the State vital statistics agency file of paternity declarations and incorporations into a child support database with over 380,000 filed declarations as of October 1, 1999;
- Reduced from weeks to 24 hours the time required to image submitted paternity declarations into an accessible database;
- Transferred direct control for administering the file of paternity declarations from the State vital statistics agency to the child support agency;
- Produced monthly management reports from the database for direct oversight and monitoring of a statewide network of more than 700 mandated providers of the voluntary paternity process; and
- Made available a comprehensive database of filed paternity declarations to county child support agencies for immediate use in child support cases.

For more information about California's SIP grant, contact Richard A. Williams, Chief, California Department of Social Services, at (916) 654-1549.

Rhode Island/New England Administrative Lien Registry

One goal of Rhode Island's SIP grant is to provide a web site for private vendors to perform administrative lien processing for the child support agency against the real property assets of delinquent obligors. The site would also provide a place to publicly list those real assets that the child support agency has placed a lien against. Also, it would serve as a single database of delinquent child support obligors, enabling statewide insurers to interface and perform claims lookup, matching, and arrears offset without the involvement of child support staff.

Results

- The Insurance Intercept Internet site has been developed and operates as a secured web site, requiring a user name and password;
- A Customer Service Hotline has been installed and staffed to assist insurers with questions and explain how to register their company on the site; and
- Through December 1999, 15 companies performed 1,265 claimant lookups on the site. Of these, 55 matched delinquent child support obligors in the Rhode Island caseload. These obligors owed a total of $769,092 in overdue child support.

The State of Rhode Island is continuing to study the best ways to get the most results from this system and is enthusiastic regarding its potential.

For more information about Rhode Island's SIP grant, contact the State's Child Support Director, Jack Murphy, at (401) 222-2966.□

Interstate Caseload Migration Patterns

By: Jeff Crook

Over the past few years, OCSE has worked with states to place interstate case processing at the top of the child support agenda. An important step in improving interstate case processing is forming a clear picture of interstate caseloads and noncustodial parent (NCP) migration patterns—the most common states to and from which each state's NCPs relocate. Knowing more about interstate caseloads and NCP relocation trends may help each state identify its most important partners in interstate child support enforcement.

To help form a clearer picture of interstate migration, OCSE reviewed the Federal Offset file for processing year 2000. This file contains all cases in which eligible, delinquent NCPs have been submitted by states for one or more of the Federal Offset remedies: Federal Income Tax Refund and Administrative Offset Programs, Passport Denial, or Multistate Financial Institution Data Match.

Interstate cases are defined as those involving an NCP who lives in a state different from the one that manages or "owns" the case. By that definition, across all states in this review, approximately 24 percent of the cases in the Federal Offset file are interstate cases. Only 11 states fall below this average. For 25 states and territories, 30 percent or more of their cases involve NCPs who have relocated to other states.

Keep in mind, however, that these observations are based on an analysis of cases in the Federal Offset file, not the entire national child support caseload. By comparison, The U.S. Interstate Commission's report, "Supporting Our Children: A Blueprint for Reform," states on page 3 that, "Based on reports of custodial mothers, interstate child support cases represent approximately 30% of child support cases in this country."

The box below shows states' interstate caseloads as a percent of their overall caseloads. While interstate cases tend to represent a smaller percent of the overall caseloads in larger states, the number of children and custodial parents in need of successful interstate case processing and enforcement is still substantial.

Overall, noncustodial parents tend to relocate to and from either Big 8 states or neighboring states (no more than two states away).

Some initial observations can be made based on OCSE's analysis. Among all 54 states and territories, the top four most common states to which NCPs migrate are Big 8 states. Overall, NCPs tend to relocate to and from either Big 8 states or neighboring states (no more than two states away).

Florida and Texas provide typical examples. When Florida NCPs move out of state, 27 percent of them move to Big 8 States while 21 percent move to neighboring states. And of NCPs leaving Texas, 40 percent move to neighboring states, while 20 percent move to Big 8 states.

When other states' NCPs move to Texas, 29 percent come from Big 8 states, while 20 percent come from neighboring states. And 40 percent of Florida's incoming NCPs arrive from Big 8 states, while 18 percent come from neighboring states.

While economic factors and geography play an important part in interstate migration, relational connections may draw some NCPs back to states in which they have lived in the past. Over 18 percent of New York's out-of-state NCPs live in Florida, while 11 percent of Florida's out-of-state NCPs live in New York—more than twice

Continued on page 7, "Migration."

Percent of Caseload That Is Interstate: By State

20 – 29 percent	AL, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, IL, IN, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MS, MO, NC, NJ, NM, NY, OH, OK, OR, TN, VA, WI
39 – 39 percent	AZ, AR, CO, IA, KS, MN, RI, SC, UT, VT, WA, WV
More than 40 percent	AK, DC, GU, ID, MT, ND, NE, NH, NV, PR, SD, VI, WY
Less than 20 percent	CA, PA, TX

Child Support Offers Protection Against Poverty

Reduces number of poor children by 500,000

The newest policy brief from The Urban Institute's Assessing the New Federalism project, *Child Support Offers Some Protection Against Poverty* by Elaine Sorensen and Chava Zibman, finds that child support reduces the number of poor children by 500,000. An important source of income for those who receive it, child support provided 16 percent of family income for children who had nonresident parents and whose families received child support in 1996.

Parents who spend time
with their children
are more likely to pay child support.

Among the other findings:

- Children with a child support order are nearly twice as likely to receive financial support from their nonresident parent as children without an order;
- Parents who spend time with their children are more likely to pay child support; and
- Child support receipt varies across states. Of the 13 states studied, Wisconsin and Minnesota were the only states that had significantly higher percentages of children receiving the full amount of child support (30 and 29 percent respectively) than the nation as a whole.

For more information, contact Harold Leibovitz or Alex Harrington at The Urban Institute at (202) 261-5410.□

Elaine Sorensen is a principal research associate and Chava Zibman is a research assistant in the Urban Institute's Income and Benefits Policy Center.

New OCSE Tribal Head

Under welfare reform, Indian tribes were for the first time specifically included in Title IV-D, Section 455 (f), of the Social Security Act. Under that legislation, they now have the option to operate their own child support programs, directly funded by OCSE.

To oversee OCSE's new Tribal Child Support Enforcement Program, OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross established the position of Supervisory Tribal Child Support Program Specialist.

In announcing the appointment of Gary N. Kimble to this position, Commissioner Ross said, "Gary Kimble brings a wide range of managerial talent to this important and complex assignment. His experience and seasoned judgment are vital ingredients to its success."

Gary N. Kimble

Mr. Kimble, a native of Fort Belknap, Montana and a member of the Gros Ventre Tribe, comes to OCSE from ACF's Administration for Native Americans, where as Commissioner he was responsible for overall direction, management, and legislative liaison for all components of the agency. In addition, he provided advice to the Secretary of HHS and other Department officials on matters involving the social and economic development of Native Americans.□

Migration

Continued from page 5

the percentage of any other state except Georgia.

In addition, migration patterns can be unexpected. Georgia is one of the top 10 states to which New York's NCPs relocate and vice versa. In fact, among all 54 states and territories, Georgia is the fifth most common State, followed by Tennessee and North Carolina.

NCP movement is often reciprocal between states but not always proportional, even if the states are in close proximity to each other. For example, while more than 18 percent of West Virginia's NCPs relocate to Ohio, less than 5 percent of Ohio's NCPs relocate to West Virginia. And while 17 percent of Mississippi's NCPs move to Tennessee, Mississippi is not one of the favored states of Tennessee's NCPs.

Based on this initial review, OCSE plans to distribute to states information on each state's top 10 interstate partners.□

Jeff Crook is a Federal Parent Locator Service Program Communications Specialist in OCSE.

How the Review Was Conducted

For the initial review, OCSE examined only Big 8 states (California, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas), which account for nearly half of the national caseload and half of the child support collected on behalf of America's children. The review has now been expanded to all 54 states and territories.

Interstate trends can be gleaned by reviewing cases contained in the Federal Offset file, which contains a record of both the submitting state—the one that "owns" the case—and the NCPs state of residence.□

Waivers

Continued from page 1.

custodial parents, and all will provide for referral of custodial parents to child support services and other services as needed.

Activities will include: educational services and career planning; fatherhood and parenting workshops; supportive relationships between parents; financial planning and skill education; "team" parenting for both mother and father; substance abuse and anger management services; transportation assistance; voluntary establishment of paternity; and regular child support enforcement services.

"The waivers represent another critical step forward in smart, commonsense family policy."

.....Jeffery M. Johnson

"The waivers represent another critical step forward in smart, commonsense family policy," said Jeffery M. Johnson, President of the National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership (NPCL).

The waivers also enable states to use federal funds for a broader set of activities than those usually funded under the child support enforcement program.

The waivers also enable states to use federal funds for a broader set of activities than those usually funded under the child support enforcement program. In testing a new cooperative working relationship between child support enforcement and nongovernmental agencies, the project sites will leverage a variety of existing resources in addition to the child support enforcement funds.

The Ford Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundations, the Lilly Endowment, and the Community Foundations in Philadelphia and Indianapolis are providing support. Technical assistance for the sites is being provided by NPCL.

If you would like more information about these projects, contact OCSE's David Arnaudo at (202) 401-5364 or Mike Ambrose at (202) 205-8740.□

U.S. Department of
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Child Support Report

Online IRG Available

OCSE is pleased to announce that the Interstate Roster and Referral Guide (IRG) is now available throug www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse/.

States can now update their own information online, as well as download another state's complete profile.

In addition to viewing the IRG, states can now update their own information online, as well as download another state's complete profile. OCSE will soon be sending information to states with more details on accessing and updating this important resource.

For more information, contact Ella Lawson at (202) 401-4963 or elawson@acf.dhhs.gov.☐

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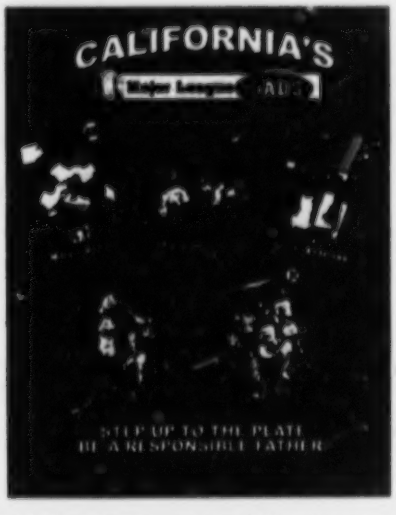
Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Vol. XXII, No. 7, July 2000

Major League Dads Step Up to the Plate

By: Claudine Payne



With baseball season in full swing, the California Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) and players from all five Major League Baseball (MLB) teams in California plan to launch their Year 2000 Responsible Fatherhood "Major League Dad" campaign at the end of July. Beginning its third year, this public awareness effort sends fathers the message to "Step Up to the Plate, Be a Responsible Father."

California's "Major League Dad" campaign is an effort to get all dads to take responsibility and become active participants in their children's lives. Studies show that children whose fathers spend time with them are more sociable, more likely to mature into responsible adults, and more likely to have higher self-esteem and grade point averages.

"This campaign conveys the importance of connecting with your children. Providing support extends beyond just writing a check; it also means being there physically and emotionally for your child," said DCSS Director Curt Child.

A player from each of the California teams is featured on individual baseball trading cards. The cards carry information about the players, as well as a message encouraging dads to "Step Up to the Plate, Be a Responsible Father." The players are: San Francisco Giants outfielder Marvin Benard; Anaheim Angels outfielder Garret Anderson; San Diego Padres pitcher Trevor Hoffman; Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Jeff Shaw; and Oakland A's outfielder/designated hitter Matt Stairs.

This campaign conveys the importance of connecting with your children. Providing support extends beyond just writing a check; it also means being there physically and emotionally for your child.

.....DCSS Director Curt Child

A poster portraying all five "Major League Dads" and their children has also been developed for the statewide campaign.

The players will be honored in a pre-game ceremony at their home stadiums and receive a commemorative plaque from a DCSS representative. During the ceremony, trading cards will be passed out to fans throughout the stadium.

Continued on page 7, "Major League Dads."

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U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement

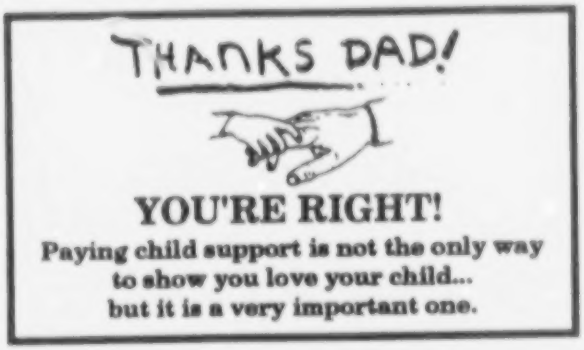
President Clinton Promotes Responsible Fatherhood

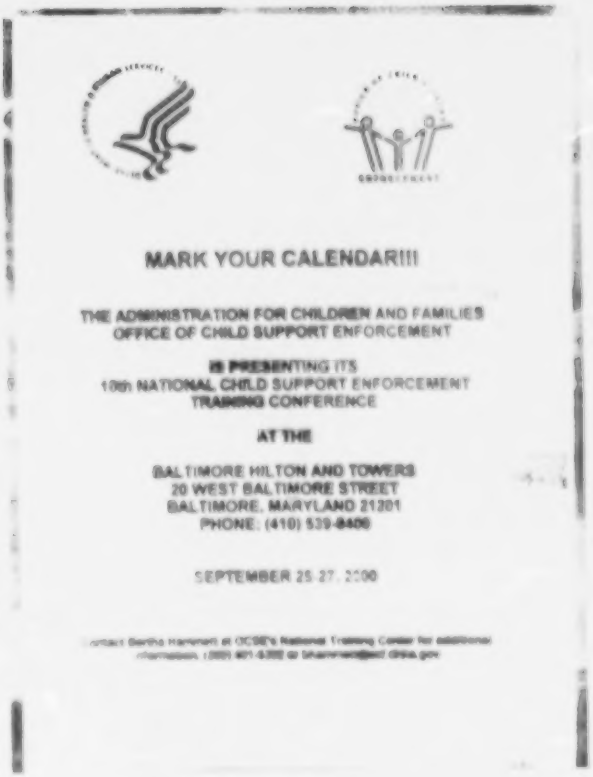
President Clinton marked the first Father's Day of the 21st century by highlighting in his weekly radio address the critical role that fathers play in their children's lives. His Administration has recognized from the start that responsible fathers are essential to building strong families and communities.

Father involvement during infancy and early childhood contributes to children's development of emotional security, curiosity, problem solving, and math and verbal skills.

In his remarks, the President noted that children benefit from the participation of two loving and involved parents. Father involvement during infancy and early childhood contributes to children's development of emotional security, curiosity, problem solving, and math and verbal skills.

Moreover, higher levels of father involvement in learning activities with their children are associated with higher student achievement. Students living in two-parent families with highly involved fathers were over 40 percent more likely to get mostly As, and even when fathers are not living with their children but remain highly involved in their learning, students were one-third more likely to get mostly As.□





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Contact Bertha Hammett at OCSE's National Training Center for additional information, (202) 401-5332 or bhammett@acf.dhhs.gov

NCSL Report Finds That Fathers Need Services

The National Conference of State Legislatures' (NCSL) July, 1999, report, "Broke But Not Deadbeat: Reconnecting Low Income Fathers and Children," finds that many low income fathers are in need of employment and family support services. Children who have healthy connections with their fathers are at reduced risk of early parenting, high school dropout, substance abuse, and juvenile delinquency.

According to the report, states, through the TANF block grant, welfare-to-work grants, the social services block grant, and other funds, have the opportunity to invest in services that help low income fathers become the emotional and financial providers that their children need.

The report is available on the Internet at: http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse/rpt/broknot.pdf.□

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Security Awareness in the Workplace

By: Danny Markley

In the nation's Child Support Enforcement Program, workers are privileged to have access to powerful databases that provide them with timely and accurate data to improve services to children and families. For example, the Federal Parent Locator Service, which incorporates the National Directory of New Hires, is a national location system operated by OCSE.

The database assists caseworkers in locating noncustodial parents, putative fathers, and custodial parties for the establishment of paternity and child support obligations and in enforcing and modifying orders for child support, custody, and visitation.

The information child support workers have about individuals and their assets carries with it the responsibility to safeguard the personal data of customers. Child support professionals are required to adhere to strict federal and state disclosure laws, and anyone who breaks these laws could be subject to fines, termination of employment, or more severe penalties.

The information child support workers have about individuals and their assets carries with it the responsibility to safeguard the personal data of customers.

The unauthorized disclosure of data could result in persons in child support databases becoming victims of "identity theft" or having their credit ruined. Accidentally releasing locate information to the wrong person, for example, could result in a domestic violence episode.

A breach of security involving unauthorized disclosure of information could endanger the customer, the program and even child support personnel. Violence in the workplace is, unfortunately, a reality.

Keeping child support professionals safe and securing government property are critical issues. In order to provide for a secure workplace, we must all identify and evaluate the risks we and our agencies face. The first step in this process involves implementing safeguards and developing security policies and procedures for data and for personnel.

OCSE, recognizing the responsibility that comes with access to sensitive data and being concerned about the privacy, security, and physical safety of child support staff and offices, has developed a "Security Awareness Program." The Program incorporates items and training mediums geared to various target audiences. These resources address security challenges throughout all levels of the workforce, from line staff to managers.

An important OCSE-product security tool is the video, *Securing the Future*. The video uses real life scenarios and interviews to illustrate how protecting data and ensuring the physical safety of child support staff and offices is essential to the continuation of services.

OCSE also has developed a Training of Trainers course, *The Child Support Enforcement Program – Securing the Future*. This six-hour course is designed to prepare trainers to deliver the security course to child support personnel in their home offices.

More recently, OCSE has developed a *Security Self-Assessment Tool* for states to use in defining where they are in security preparedness, and to assist them in designing and implementing a comprehensive, successful security plan.

A course for managers and senior officials, *Securing the Future: A Manager's Perspective*, is currently under development. This course will focus on the critical role managers play in ensuring security of information, personnel, and assets, as well as the need for both security and disaster recovery plans.

For more information on any of OCSE's security initiatives, contact Danny Markley at (703) 824-4905 (dmarkley@acf.dhhs.gov) or Richard Shullaw at (202) 401-4843(rshullaw@acf.dhhs.gov). □

Danny Markley is a Senior Security Analyst in OCSE.

Coming Soon

OCSE's Silver Anniversary Celebration

September 25 – 27, Baltimore, Maryland

25 years of
Giving Hope and Support to America's Children. □

Washington State MSFIDM Success

By: Mark Mintzer

The Washington State Division of Child Support, using the Multistate Financial Institution Data Match (MSFIDM), recently attached an account valued at $96,317. The custodial parent had received TANF benefits from April 1989 through 1997 for her two children. The noncustodial parent owed a debt totaling $85,951, which was settled for $74,344, with $40,085 going to the custodial parent and the remainder to TANF arrears.

The agency also followed up on a match with a bank that resulted in a $38,417 levy. The custodial parent received $28,494 while $9,923 went to the State as a TANF recovery.

In another case, a delinquent obligor was found to have six accounts with a total value of over $250,000. A levy was issued which resulted in a $34,800 payment.

Finally, a Washington noncustodial parent with a $200,000 savings account at a local credit union had his account frozen. The resulting levy paid off three TANF related debts totaling $31,573 and arrearages owed to the custodial parent in the amount of $6,593. As a result of this levy, two cases were closed and the remaining case was brought current.

Washington's Division of Child Support remains committed to improving the lives of children by providing quality child support services. Over the last 11 months, the agency has contracted and exchanged data with 90 percent of in-state financial institutions. In addition, MSFIDM matches received from OCSE are processed weekly. The Division of Child Support has succeeded in collecting over $3,742,000 as a direct result of FIDM and MSFIDM and is confident this success will continue for the foreseeable future.

For additional information, contact Mark Mintzer at (360) 664-5062.□

Mark Mintzer is the Multistate Financial Institution Data Match Coordinator for the State of Washington.

A Snapshot of Changes in TANF Caseloads Since Enactment of Welfare Reform

TANF Cases As Percent of Total U.S. Population

1994	5.5 percent
1999	2.4 percent

Total TANF Families and Recipients (in thousands)

	August, 1996	September, 1999	Percent 1996 - 1999
Families	4,415	2,453	- 44 percent
	1,962,000 fewer families		
Recipients	12,241	6,604	-46 percent
	5,637,000 fewer recipients.□		

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

More Special Improvement Project (SIP) Grant Updates

Florida

Bay County, Florida, early cooperation with child support as an eligibility requirement for TANF and Medicaid applicants.

As a condition of eligibility, TANF and Medicaid applicants must visit the child support enforcement office of the Department of Revenue and either cooperate in initiating a child support case or seek determination of good cause not to cooperate. CSE interviewers explain the services offered by CSE, the benefits of establishing paternity and a child support obligation, and show how the applicant can help to move the case forward by keeping all scheduled appointments for genetic testing and court hearings.

Results

- A reduction of sanction actions;
- Savings on TANF payments to recipients who never cooperate with CSE;
- More efficient use of time by staff in interviews.

For more information, contact Susan Mohnen at (850) 414-8949.

Illinois

Illinois Department of Public Aid/Division of Child Support Enforcement and Catholic Charities of Chicago WIC—Expansion of Paternity Establishment Program to 15 WIC sites.

With this project, Illinois' Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE) is working with Catholic Charities and the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) in Chicago to expand from four sites to fifteen a paternity establishment program of the original WIC Food Center community-based organization pilot.

WIC staff at the 15 sites have spoken to 22,887 mothers about paternity establishment, and 398 parents have signed the Voluntary Acknowledgement of Paternity forms.

Major Activities

- Development of a procedures manual for state and local child support directors, agency heads, WIC managers, and community-based organization leadership;
- Use of audio tapes to provide oral explanation of parents' rights and responsibilities in English and Spanish; and
- Use of private areas to discuss paternity establishment and related forms in a confidential setting.

Other activities include development of a video and a number of new outreach materials on the theme: "Get in Step with PEP."

Results

- Good candidates for signing the voluntary acknowledgment of paternity are parents who are living together with a child of any age, and parents with younger children (under 5 years of age) but especially under one year of age; and
- Paternity acknowledgments appear more likely to be signed where there are not large concentrations of public housing.

For more information, contact Lois Rakov at (312) 793-8213.

Texas/Mexico Border Initiative

To assess enforcement issues and to identify innovative procedures and practices to improve child support efforts on both sides of the Texas/Mexico border.

Together with its U.S. and Mexican partners, the Office of the Attorney General's (OAG) Child Support Division (CSD) has been engaged in identifying and assessing the issues and problems associated with cross-border establishment and enforcement of child support. Key aspects of the project are:

- Locating and obtaining service of process on noncustodial parents and alleged fathers;
- Upgrading systems for communications, funds transfer, and document generation;
- Developing and implementing bilingual forms and standardized procedures for transmitting cases; and
- Conducting an annual training conference and assessment of progress.

The project is designed to minimize involvement of the Central Authority in Mexico and foster more efficient and cost effective State-to-State mechanisms.

Results

- The Child Support Director, the Attorney General, and the Governor of Texas have signed Ninos Primero Implementation Arrangements or "Convenios" with their counterparts in the Mexican Border States of Tamaulipas and Nuevo Leon;
- The OAG has developed and urged acceptance in Mexico of the OAG's proposed "two way" forms including an authenticated, bilingual abstract of the Tribunal Order form to be used in lieu of a fully translated support order; and

Continued on page 6, "SIP Grants."

Conference Calendar 2000

The Calendar is printed quarterly in *CSR*: in January, April, July, and October. If you are planning a meeting or conference and would like it to be included in the Calendar, please call OCSE's Bertha Hammett at (202) 401-5292 or fax her at (202) 401-5559. The Calendar is accessible through the Federal OCSE web site under the "News" section: www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse/new.htm.

Select "Calendar of Events."

July

- 16-19 *New York State Public Welfare Association Annual Summer Conference*, Sheraton Hotel, Saratoga Springs, New York, Laura Staerker (518) 465-9305.
- 18-20 *South Dakota Annual Child Support Investigator Conference*, Brookings Inn, Brookings, SD, Carmin Sommer (605) 773-3641.
- 26-28 *California Family Support Council Quarterly Meeting*, Town & Country Hotel & Convention Center, San Diego, CA, Noanne St. Jean (559) 582-3211 X 2403.
- 30 – August 3 *NCSEA 49th Annual Conference*, Town and Country Resort, San Diego CA, Carol Henry (202) 624-8180.

August

- 23-25 *Georgia CSE Staff Training Seminar*, Hyatt Regency Riverfront, Savannah, GA, Gail Moon (404) 657-3866.
- 30-September 1 *Northeast Hub Fatherhood Conference*, Marriott Copley Plaza, Boston, MA, Carol Monterio (617) 565-2462.

September

- 4-7 *Southwest Regional CSE Association 2001 Annual Training Conference*, Renaissance Hotel, 1 Myriad Garden, Oklahoma City, OK 73102, Dormeil Richardson (405) 522-2705.
- 17-21 *Western Interstate CSE Association (WICSEC) Annual Training Conference*, Little America Hotel and Resort, Cheyenne, WY, Shawna Hanesworth (307) 773-9001.
- 25-27 *Federal OCSE 10th National CSE Training Conference*, OCSE's Silver Anniversary Celebration: 25 Years of Giving Hope and Support to America's Children, Baltimore Hilton and Towers, Baltimore, MD, Bertha Hammett (202) 401-5292 or Isabelle Howes (202) 314-3471.

October

- 2-4 *Washington State Family Support Council Conference*, Seattle Center, Seattle, WA, Roy Vervair (425) 438-4949 or Judy Young (360) 664-5063.
- 3-6 *Alabama CSE Association Conference*, Alabama State Park, Gulf Shores, AL, Wade Drinkard (334) 295-8771.
- 10-12 *California Family Support Council Quarterly Meeting*, Embassy Suites, San Luis Obispo, CA, Noanne St. Jean (559) 582-3211 X 2403.
- 18-20 *Nebraska CSE Association 19th Annual Training Conference*, Holiday Inn, Kearney, NE, Colleen Lembke (308) 534-4350 X 205.
- 23 *Indiana Fathers and Families Conference*, Westin Hotel, Indianapolis, IN, Joseph Mamlin (317) 233-4482.
- 26-28 *Social Commission on the Status of Black Men National Conference*, Adams Mark Hotel Downtown, Indianapolis, IN, Stephen Jackson (317) 233-1744.□

SIP Grants

Continued from page 5.

- Negotiations are underway with several financial institutions to use a more cost effective and timely way of transferring and converting payments from dollars to pesos and vice versa by an EFT/EDI process.

For more information contact Howard Baldwin at (512) 460-6122.□

Child Support Children First

Communication Eases Acceptance of Change in Arizona

By: Laura R. Secondo

Welfare reform provided an opportunity for Arizona to create a new child support landscape. How could the new requirements be integrated into daily practice and readily accepted by staff and customers alike?

Arizona officials singled out communication as the key.

Information packets and power point presentations insured that every lineworker, supervisor and official received a standard message and understood the implementation efforts.

The Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE) began a statewide campaign to educate staff on the magnitude of changes brought by welfare reform. Under the guidance of the IV-D Welfare Reform Administrator, a series of events to support and manage the change effort was coordinated.

- Traditional training and communication forums were analyzed;
- Bi-monthly meetings were held with all contracting County Attorneys and private vendors;
- Interested elected officials were asked to provide regular updates on all on-going welfare reform initiatives;
- Key staff accompanied the Administrator on tours to every local office throughout the State. Information packets and power point presentations ensured that every lineworker, supervisor and official received a standard message and understood the implementation efforts;
- Quarterly newsletters were created with a section reserved for each program administrator;
- Four professional information videos were produced;
- Training sessions on centralized payment processing were delivered to all Clerks of Court throughout the State; and
- DCSE joined with the Administrative Office of the Courts in presenting information on the changes to the private bar, the judiciary, and other interested stakeholders.

Throughout the effort, DCSE's training staff worked hand-in-hand with the project teams to insure that program changes were quickly reflected in standard curricula.

The result? A recognition of the need for change and a willingness on the part of Arizona's child support staff to accept it as part of the price of program improvement. This in turn led to the State's ability to meet the challenges of welfare reform. Among Arizona's most successful outcomes are:

- **Implementation of New Hire.** For the period 10/1/98 through 1/31/00, we have received 1,615,876 reports of which 59,113 matched our cases;
- **Implementation of the SDU.** Between 12/1/98 and 2/29/00, the Arizona SDU processed 1.3 million nonIV-D payments, which represented $309.5 million. During that same period, the SDU processed 1,970,590 IV-D payments, representing $278,383,095 of support; and
- **Implementation of direct wage withholding.** Between 10/1/98 and 2/29/00, DCSE issued 53,659 direct wage withholdings, a majority resulting from information from the New Hire Directory.□

Laura Secondo is now with the Texas Child Support Program. She was IV-D Welfare Reform Administrator in Arizona's Child Support Program when this article was prepared.

Major League Dads

Continued from page 1.

"Major League Dad" posters and trading cards will be distributed statewide to county Family Support Divisions, Social Services (welfare) Offices, public high schools, junior high/intermediate schools, continuation schools, social service programs for pregnant minors, and prenatal clinics.

For more information about the Responsible Fatherhood effort and other Department of Child Support Services outreach materials, contact the Child Support Project at (530) 898-4750.□

Claudine Payne is Manager of the Child Support Project at California State University, Chico, California.

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Update: IRG State Profile Information

OCSE is pleased to announce that the State Profile section of the Interstate Roster and Referral Guide (IRG) is now available on the OCSE Website for viewing by the public.

The State Profiles outline each State's child support enforcement program, providing information on:

- Program operations;
- Age of majority;
- Statutes of limitations;
- Guidelines;
- Review and adjustments; and
- Paternity establishment.

Look for the State Profiles at: http.ocse3.acf.dhhs.gov/ext/irg/pub/sps/selectastate.cfm. ☐

Child Support Report
Vol. XXII No. 7
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Child Support Report is a publication of the Office of Child Support Enforcement, Division of Consumer Services

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Vol. XXII, No. 8, August 2000

Family Structure in the United States

By: Pamela J. Smock

The following is excerpted from Pamela J. Smock's article, "Cohabitation in the United States: An Appraisal of Research Themes, Findings, and Implications," published in the August Annual Review of Sociology, *Volume 26 (2000). Dr. Smock's article is a review of published research studies of cohabitation in the United States. The implications of the research findings on cohabitation's effect on marital stability and children's well-being make this an article of interest to and importance for the child support community.*

Unmarried cohabitation has increased sharply in recent years in the United States. It has in fact become so prevalent that the majority of marriages and remarriages now begin as cohabiting relationships, and most younger men and women cohabit at some point in their lives. . . . The percentage of marriages preceded by cohabitation rose from about 10 percent for those marrying between 1965 and 1974 to over 50 percent for those marrying between 1990 and 1994. . . .

A large body of literature has established that family structure has important effects on children.

For most couples, cohabitation is a rather short-lived experience with most ending it either by terminating the relationship or by marrying within a few years. . . .

Cohabitation is not a childless state. About one-half of previously-married cohabitors and 35 percent of never-married cohabitors have children in the household. . . .

Cohabitation is . . . just one component . . . of a constellation of longer-term changes occurring in the United States. . . . Scholars emphasize various aspects [cultural, economic, and sexual] of long-term social change to explain cohabitation. . . .

How does cohabitation affect marital stability?

Premarital cohabitation tends to be associated with lower marital quality and to increase the risk of divorce, even after taking account of variables known to be associated with divorce. . . .

Two main explanations have been posed to explain the association. . . . The first . . . refers to the idea that

Continued on page 2, "Cohabitation."

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement

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Cohabitation

Continued from page 1.

people who cohabit before marriage differ in important ways from those who do not, and these ways increase the likelihood of marital instability. . . . The second explanation is that there is something about cohabitation itself, i.e., the *experience* of cohabitation, that increases the likelihood of marital disruption above and beyond one's characteristics at the start of the cohabitation. Through cohabitation people learn about and come to accept the temporary nature of relationships, and in particular that there are alternatives to marriage. . . .

Axinn & Thornton (1992) . . . examine whether the experience of cohabitation between the ages of 18 and 23 significantly alters young men's and women's attitudes toward marriage and divorce. They find that it does, with cohabitation changing people's attitudes in ways that make them more prone to divorce. . . .

How does cohabitation affect children?

Only a small proportion of children [3.5 percent] live in cohabiting households at any one point in time. . . . However, the proportion of children who will *ever* live in a cohabiting household during childhood is estimated to be a substantial 40 percent, underscoring the importance of understanding the effects of parental cohabitation on children. . . .

Axinn & Thornton (1992) . . . find that cohabitation [changes] people's attitudes in ways that make them more prone to divorce.

Past studies have identified two important issues regarding children's experience of parental cohabitation. The first is that children already disadvantaged in terms of parental income and education are relatively more likely to experience this family form. . . . Second, children experiencing parental cohabitation are also more likely to undergo further transitions in family structure. . . . Most children who are born or ever live in a cohabiting family will experience a change in family structure within a few years. . . .

These findings do not bode well for children's well-being. A large body of literature has established that family structure has important effects on children, with deleterious ones for children who grow up without both biological parents. . . .

There is evidence that the *number* of changes in family structure is particularly important. The fewer the changes, the better for children. . . . To date, however, we have very little direct knowledge about the possible effects of cohabitation on various aspects of children's well-being relative to other family structures. . . .

Children . . . disadvantaged in terms of parental income and education are relatively more likely to experience [cohabitation . . . and] . . . more likely to undergo further transitions in family structure . . . findings [that] do not bode well for children's well-being.

A study by Thomson & colleagues (1998) is an important exception. . . . Using the . . . National Survey of Families and Households, they examine the impact of a single mother's entrance in either a cohabitation or a remarriage on mothering behaviors. They generally find few differences in the effects of the two union types. The authors note, however, that small sample size precludes conclusive interpretation.

A copy of Dr. Smock's paper can be downloaded from: http://soc.AnnualRevews.org/.□

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Pamela J. Smock is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology & Population Studies Center at the University of Michigan.

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HHS Awards New Grants for Innovative Child Support Enforcement Projects

In July, HHS/OCSE awarded more than $600,000 in new grants to states, nonprofit organizations, and a district court to further strengthen the nation's child support enforcement program.

"These grants will test fresh and effective means to improve the overall well-being of children and families," said Secretary Shalala.

The grants provide opportunities to test new methods to improve child support enforcement services and form new partnerships to promote responsible parenthood.

"These projects can help us move the program in new directions to help parents become better providers for their children and to ensure that child support innovations will bring additional resources to America's children."

.....*OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross*

State Grants

- Wayne County, Michigan (Detroit) will use new technology to reduce undistributed collections;
- West Virginia will create a new secure web site to allow other states access to critical information to improve timely disbursement of child support collections;
- Texas will build a new communications network to connect with Mexico to facilitate faster processing of cases, including hearings over video and audio conferences; and
- New Jersey's medical support project will establish cooperative agreements and better collaborations with state health agencies to increase health insurance coverage for children.

Nonprofit Grants

The three grants to nonprofit organizations are designed to help parents provide reliable and regular child support.

- The Eighth Judicial District Court in Las Vegas will implement a drug court program where noncustodial parents will be referred to substance abuse screening and treatment;
- Ecumenical Child Care Network's "Resources for Families" project will forge new collaborations among houses of worship, welfare agencies, early childhood, and other community programs to share information on child support requirements in four cities: Chicago; Richmond, Virginia; Seattle; and Winston-Salem, North Carolina; and
- The Women's Law Center will bring together providers and advocates to develop model program ideas to help low-income young fathers and mothers as well as recommendations on updating and modifying child support orders.

"National efforts to improve child support services often begin with creative state and local projects," said Olivia A. Golden, HHS Assistant Secretary for Children and Families.

"These projects can help us move the program in new directions to help parents become better providers for their children and to ensure that child support innovations will bring additional resources to America's children," added OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross.

The grant recipients by project area are:

Improved management of undistributed collections	
• Wayne County, Michigan	$187,550
Foster Improved Interstate Case Processing	
• Texas	$196,600
• West Virginia	$25,597
Review and Adjustment	
• New Jersey	$50,000
Parental Responsibility and Services	
• Ecumenical Child Care Network	$50,000
• Eighth Judicial District Court, Nevada	$50,000
• Women's Law Center	$50,000
Total	**$609,747.□**

Washington State Receives Recognition for Automation

By: Jon Conine

Washington State's Division of Child Support was recently recognized for having the first information technology system in the nation to be certified for meeting the requirements of federal welfare reform legislation.

Division Director Meg Sollenberger accepted the recognition award and attributed the accomplishment to the State's in-house information technology staff.

"Our staff know child support, they know the system, and above all, they know technology," she said. "The funding spent on this project was money well spent."

A total of $1.2 million in State and federal funds was spent on new technology and automation tools mandated by PRWORA. The Division expects to collect almost $50 million more this year in child support payments, much of that as a result of the new technology.

SEMS has facilitated increased collections by providing electronic links with other agencies. . . . Last year, Washington State received almost $20 million in payments as a result of this effort.

The primary tool is the Support Enforcement Management System (SEMS), a case management program with over 2,000 work stations in 47 locations around the State, linked by a wide area network. The SEMS program stores and manages information on each of the State's 350,000 child support cases.

SEMS has facilitated increased collections by providing electronic links with other agencies for initiatives such as license suspension, which allows the State to suspend driver and professional licenses of parents delinquent in child support payments. Last year, Washington State received almost $20 million in payments as a result of this effort.

"Being recognized as the first State to meet the PRWORA system requirements is a great honor," Sollenberger said, "but systems development is a continuous process. We need to continue to incorporate the fast-paced advances in technology which enable us to collect more child support for more of our State's children."□

Jon Conine is Project Manager of SEMS.

In Connecticut: Joint Information and Problem Resolution

The Child Support Information and Problem Resolution Unit (IPRU) in Connecticut is a joint effort between the Judicial Branch and the Department of Social Services. The Unit is staffed by support enforcement specialists (Child Support Advocates) who have significant field experience, and whose function is to analyze, evaluate, and trouble-shoot child support cases that cannot be resolved by the field offices.

IPRU acts as a mechanism to improve customer service and make a multi-agency program more understandable to the public.

In addition, the IPRU acts as a mechanism to improve customer service and make a multi-agency program more understandable to the public. The national toll-free child support help-line number is 1-800-228-KIDS. The help-line is staffed from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. Letters can be faxed to (860) 566-2452, or mailed to the Information and Problem Resolution Unit, 999 Asylum Avenue, 4th floor, Hartford, CT 06105.□

This information is reprinted with permission from The Child Support Guide, *published by The Connecticut Department of Social Services, March 2000.*

Performance Management Pays Off for Tennessee

Improved Productivity, Accuracy

In January 1999, managers at Child Support Services of Davidson County, Tennessee (Nashville) took stock of their caseload of 66,000 cases. If they were to meet federal performance standards and obtain maximum federal incentive payments, they realized that the federal standards had to be converted into actions to be taken at the individual worker level.

Though there were office-wide data to measure performance, there were no standards against which to assess the performance of individual workers or track their improvement. Managers needed better tools to measure performance, reward good work, and counsel workers when necessary.

> *"Everybody works better when they know what is expected of them."*
>
> .....*Tennessee State employee*

The solution: develop a performance management system for the entire agency based on the federal performance standards of paternities established, cases with support orders, current support collected versus support due, cases with arrears payments owing, and medical support. The plan: work steadily toward meeting those standards on an agency-wide basis by creating goals for every worker and measuring them monthly.

Standards were developed for production, as well as accuracy. Production standards for individual workers were measures of key inputs, outputs, and outcomes, with monthly goals.

To measure accuracy, five cases are pulled at random monthly from those handled by each worker and reviewed by the manager to answer three questions: Were appropriate actions taken? Were the actions taken within federal timeframes? Were they fully documented on the automated system?

Workers are given a score based on their performance on the sample cases. Those who meet their goals are recognized each month at a staff meeting and given small rewards, such as certificates or movie tickets.

Performance standards are reviewed quarterly to see if adjustments are needed and if federal performance standards are being met.

The result: productivity continues to increase steadily each month, and the agency is near to achieving its goal of a minimum accuracy rate of 90 percent. Other benefits include higher employee job satisfaction rates, fewer employee complaints, and lower turnover. As one employee said, "Everybody works better when they know what is expected of them."

For more information, contact Pam Peyton at (615) 313-4880.□

Michigan Paternity Establishment Initiative

By: Eileen Schrauben

The Michigan Family Independence Agency's (FIA) Office of Child Support is piloting an initiative to help increase paternity establishment rates for unwed parents and to involve fathers during the mother's pregnancy. The initiative will focus on educating health care providers to be more aware of the paternity establishment process and to assist in patient education and counseling prior to delivery.

Several Michigan agencies are collaborating on this initiative. These include the Office of Child Support, the Department of Community Health, Wayne State University's School of Medicine, the Michigan Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (OB/GYN), and the Wayne County Friend of the Court.

A survey has been developed for OB/GYN practitioners to determine their practice patterns, knowledge, and attitudes relative to paternity establishment. The results will supplement a Grand Rounds presentation (educational lecture) scheduled for late November at Hutzel Hospital in Detroit, the largest obstetric hospital in Michigan.

The presentation, by a multidisciplinary group of experts, will include many OB/GYN and Family Medicine practitioners from the greater Detroit Metropolitan area, as well as hospital medical records personnel, and will provide a forum for an in-depth discussion of current activities related to paternity establishment.

Continued on page 7, "Michigan."

5th Edition of State Best Practices Available

OCSE's *Compendium of State Best Practices & Good Ideas*, 5th edition, is now available.

Practices profiled in the *Compendium* contain information that child support staff nationwide will find useful in their work. Coverage includes a description of problems addressed, information about funding and results, advice on replication, and the name of a state contact person for additional information.

If you know of programs or organizational and training practices in your area that have produced results, please tell us. Contact your ACF Regional Office CSE Program Specialist, or Myles Schlank, Chief of OCSE's Technical Assistance Branch in the Division of State and Local Assistance, at (202) 401-9329.

OCSE is pleased to give these best practices and good ideas visibility while not endorsing any particular practices. There are many ways to improve performance and no one way will necessarily serve everyone equally well.

Copies of the *Compendium* can be obtained electronically from OCSE's Home Page on the Internet:

http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/ACFPrograms/CSE/ □

Training in Criminal Nonsupport

Training in criminal nonsupport* emphasizes a team approach. The target audience consists of representatives from U.S. Attorneys' Offices, the FBI, the HHS Office of the Inspector General, and child support enforcement.

This past Spring, OCSE's National Training Center and Division of Audit worked closely with DOJ's Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys in designing a 2½ day seminar. The first delivery of the seminar took place in June, at the DOJ National Advocacy Center in Coumbia, SC. OCSE central office participants included Jerry Gates, Yvette Riddick, and Amy Gober, while Bob Richie and Ann Russell represented the Atlanta Regional Office.

The seminar was an opportunity for CSE staff to learn what types of cases DOJ can prosecute and what information is needed, as well as to exchange ideas on what works and what doesn't. It included presentations on the legal requirements to prosecute cases, the referral process, and the ramifications this process has on the investigation and prosecution of criminal nonsupport cases.

Other topics included methods and resources needed to investigate such cases, victim/witness issues, charging decisions, plea negotiations, sentencing, and practical issues that arise during post-sentencing.

In partnership with OCSE, DOJ expects to conduct the seminar three more times – in October, January, and June. For more information, e-mail Yvette Riddick, Chief of OCSE's National Training Center, at yriddick@acf.dhhs.gov. □

**Criminal nonsupport training includes coverage of Public Law 105-187, the Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act of 1998, which extended the Child Support Recovery Act, creating two new categories of felonies: traveling across state or country lines with the intent to evade child support payments if the obligation has remained unpaid for a period longer than one year or is greater than $5,000; and failing to pay child support to a child residing in another state when the obligation has remained unpaid for a period of longer than two years or is greater than $10,000.*

Child Support Children First

International Child Support Reciprocity Update

By: Stephen Grant

Section 459A of the Social Security Act [42 U.S.C. 659A] authorizes the Secretary of State with the concurrence of the Secretary of Health and Human Services to declare foreign countries or their political subdivisions to be reciprocating countries for the enforcement of family support obligations if the country has or has undertaken to establish procedures to establish and enforce duties of support for residents of the U.S. at no cost.

With the participation of the Department of Health and Human Services, state IV-D representatives, and other experts, the Department of State has held negotiations with over 30 countries regarding the establishment of reciprocity, has concluded agreements with several, and is nearing completion of agreements with others.

Ireland, Poland, the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic, and the Canadian Provinces of Nova Scotia, British Columbia, and Manitoba have in effect federal reciprocity agreements under 42 U.S.C. 659A. On May 19, 2000, the Office of the Legal Adviser, U.S. Department of State, published the first of the cumulative public notices on completed federal reciprocity agreements in the Federal Register [65 FR 31953].

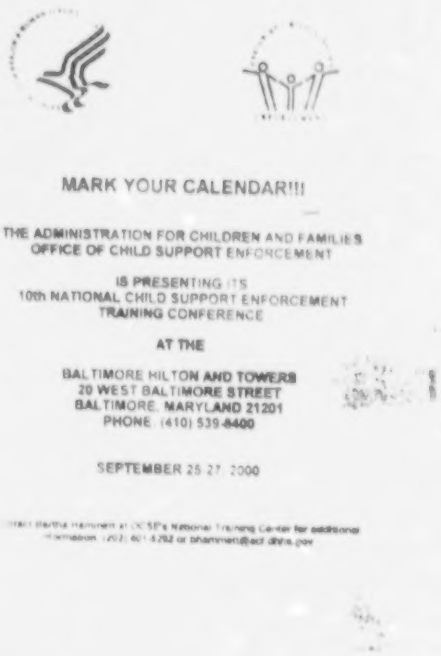
Additionally, agreement in principle has been reached and most of the details completed with Portugal, the Netherlands, Norway, and Australia, and it is anticipated that these agreements will soon be effective. The U.S. Central Authority for International Child Support, established in the Office of Child Support, is available to facilitate IV-D efforts on case cooperation with these jurisdictions.

Further information on international child support enforcement generally may be found at the Department of State's webpage [http://travel.state.gov/child_support.html], or by contacting Stephen Grant at (202) 260-5943, or by email ocseinternational@acf.dhhs.gov. □

Stephen Grant is Director, U.S. Central Authority for International Child Support, within OCSE.

Child Support to Celebrate Silver Anniversary

As part of OCSE's 10th National Child Support Training Conference, the Child Support Program will celebrate 25 years of helping America's children and families. We hope you will be in Baltimore with us. Mark Your Calendar! □



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SEPTEMBER 25-27, 2000

Michigan

Continued from page 5

Pre and post-test documents will accompany the presentation as another means of evaluating the success of the initiative. FIA anticipates that statewide implementation will take place during 2001 via teleconferencing and on-site presentations. The program is adaptable to a national audience.

For more information, call Eileen Schrauben, at (517) 335-3921. □

Eileen Schrauben is a Program Specialist with Michigan's Office of Child Support.

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Child Support Report

Head Start - Child Support Collaboration

More than 2,000 Head Start programs nationwide recently were sent a copy of the OCSE-produced videocassette, *The Power of 2: Voluntarily Acknowledging Paternity.*

The video is intended for use in Head Start parent education activities, particularly in tandem with inviting local child support program staff to speak at parent meetings.

Head Start programs also received bulk copies of the brochure, *Child Support Services for Families in Head Start,* to distribute to each family enrolled in the program for their information. These activities are further results of the ongoing collaboration between OCSE and the Head Start Bureau. ☐

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement *Vol. XXII, No. 9, September 2000*

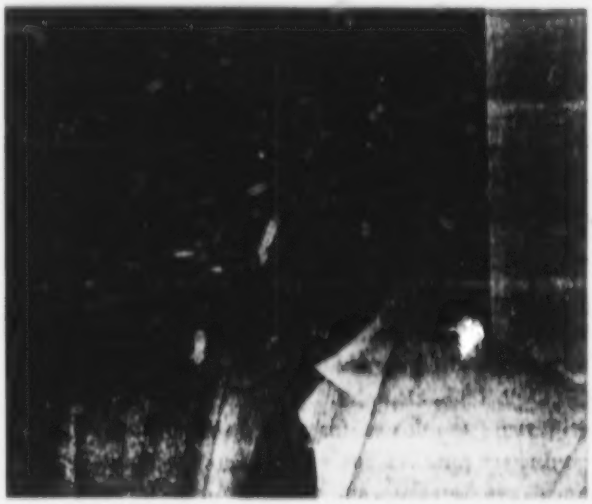
Giving Hope and Support to America's Children and Families: Child Support At 25

David Gray Ross

This month the national child support program—a federal/state/local partnership nearly 60,000 strong— celebrates 25 years of service to America's children and families. It has been my privilege to be the Commissioner of the Child Support Program for the last seven of those years, and I'm very proud of what, together, we have accomplished.

During my tenure I have visited every state in the union and talked with many of you about child support issues, the problems we face, and how best to resolve them. I have found in every instance a spirit of participation—a willingness to contribute, to partake, to be engaged in the shared task of serving the children of this great country—that goes far beyond what is required by any job. I am grateful to you for that spirit and for the privilege of being in partnership with you during a time of tremendous program growth and progress.

In 1999, our program collections were nearly $16 billion, double the amount collected in 1992 and a 10 percent increase from 1998. In 1999 we collected a record $1.3 billion in overdue child support from federal tax refunds alone. A new program to match parents in arrears with financial records found nearly 900,000 accounts since August 1999, with a total value of about $3 billion. Nearly 1.5 million men acknowledged paternity in 1998, an increase of 12 percent in one year and three times as many as in 1992. The Passport Denial Program has collected more than $4 million in lump sum child support payments and is currently denying 30 to 40 passports to delinquent parents per day in an effort to collect financial support for their children.



OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross

These outcomes have helped so many custodial parents and their children to have better lives and are, by any standard, impressive achievements. They also validate our determination to see to it that legal child support obligations are met—that money owed is paid to children who both need and deserve it.

But the child support program is about much more than money. In an important sense, we really have just one job to do and that is to give hope and support—emotional as well as financial—to America's children and families. That puts us squarely in the business of promoting families and responsible parenthood, of helping to

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
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Ross

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establish better relations between parents and their children.

We reach out to noncustodial parents who owe child support to involve them in the lives of their children, to draw them into the circle of the family, to celebrate their roles as fathers and mothers and to underscore the need for love and support from both parents.

In making this effort, I believe we have reshaped the culture of the agency into one that is more inclusive and welcoming to those who would like to share the struggle with us.

In an important sense,
we really have just one job to do
and that is to give hope and support—
emotional as well as financial—
to America's children and families.

Can we rest on our laurels? No. We all know that there is much more to be done to meet the mounting needs of our nation's vulnerable children and families. The next 25 years will bring new challenges to new staff. Though many of us will be gone, the work we have done will live on, and the foundation we have laid will, I believe, serve the program well.

On behalf of the children and families we are charged to serve, I thank you for your dedication and support during my time as Commissioner and wish only the best for you in coming years.

"Children First!"□

Tenth National Training Conference

In Baltimore, Maryland, September 25 – 27, OCSE continues its tradition of sponsoring a national training conference for child support professionals from across the country. The conference reflects the high priority OCSE has given to training in recent years and is of special significance this year because of the child support program's 25th anniversary. The theme is: "OCSE's Silver Celebration: 25 years of Giving Hope and Support to America's Children." Throughout the conference, there will be special activities to acknowledge and celebrate staff of the child support enforcement community who have worked together to achieve remarkable results for America's children.

Professionals from all segments of the child support enforcement community will be able to select from over 45 workshops and plenary sessions. Over 100 experts from federal and state programs, as well as nonprofit organizations, will share information and ideas on a wide variety of topics. There will be workshops on OCSE's Interstate Reform Initiative and a case-by-case synopsis of legal issues regarding UIFSA. Four workshops are dedicated to state automated systems. Six workshops in the Technology Center will address such topics as automation of state plan processing and the use of distance learning techniques.

Other workshops will feature OCSE's Project Save Our Children program, the new Tribal child support enforcement program, and the next steps in implementing the recommendations of the Medical Child Support Working Group. Also, among others, there are workshops on noncustodial parents and welfare-to-work, fatherhood issues, customer service, financial institution data match, the use of FPLS data, security and privacy of data, and undistributed collections.

Housed at the Baltimore Hilton and Towers in downtown Baltimore, close to the Inner Harbor and Camden Yards Stadium, the conference offers opportunities to learn and network, to celebrate and enjoy, to consider the great progress the CSE program has made, and to plan for the future.

"If you haven't already registered, we encourage you to do so immediately. For registration information contact Bertha Hammett at (202) 401-5292. For other conference information, contact Brenda James at (202) 401-4536.□

Nonresident Fathers and Their Access to Employment-Based Health Care Coverage

A Variety of Obstacles Limit Coverage

In the Child Support Performance and Incentive Act of 1998, Congress directed the establishment of the Medical Support Working Group by the Secretaries of HHS and Labor. The Working Group was charged with submitting a report to HHS and Labor identifying impediments to the effective enforcement of medical child support and recommending solutions to those impediments.

The report *Nonresident Fathers: To What Extent Do They Have Access to Employment-Based Health Care Coverage?* contains findings presented to the Medical Support Working Group during the course of its deliberations. These findings provided a fact-based analytical framework for the Working Group members to consider as they developed their own report (see back page).

Half of the nonresident fathers who do not provide health care to their children do not have access to employer-based health care.

Custodial parents are currently more likely than nonresident parents to carry private health care coverage for their child support eligible children. Of the 10.2 million custodial parent families included in the analysis, nonresident parents provide health care coverage for 24 percent, custodial parents (or their spouses) provide health care coverage for 35 percent, and public coverage only is provided for 35 percent. About six percent have no health care coverage during the year.

Most nonresident fathers required to provide health care coverage do so, but there is still room for improvement. Sixty-eight percent of nonresident fathers provide health care coverage when required to do so. An additional 12 percent of nonresident fathers provide health care coverage even though the award does not require them to do so (15 percent) or there is no child support award (12 percent).

Half of the nonresident fathers who do not provide health care to their children do not have access to employer based health care. Thirty-eight percent of nonresident fathers work for employers who do not provide any coverage or do not provide dependent coverage. Of the remaining, 10 percent are self-employed, 38 percent are not working, and 14 percent are incarcerated.

Most nonresident fathers (68 percent) required to provide health care coverage do so.

Almost half of the nonresident fathers who do not provide health care coverage for their children who live elsewhere have incomes below 200 percent of poverty. The majority (73 percent) of nonresident fathers with incomes below 200 percent of poverty do not have access to employment based coverage. At this level of family income, resident children would usually be determined to be eligible for Medicaid or SCHIP.

Continuity of coverage and lack of geographic proximity represent additional barriers to providing employer-based coverage. Of the nonresident fathers who report covering their children who live elsewhere, 44 percent covered their children for the entire year. Only 40 percent of nonresident fathers live in the same city or county as their children, making access to geographically limited health care plans, such as HMOs and PPOs, more difficult.

The findings in this report are based on an analysis of data collected by the Bureau of the Census as part of the 1993 Survey of Income and Program Participation and on micro-simulations of nonresident fathers' access to employer-provided health care coverage based on data from the April 1993 Current Population Survey Employee Benefits Supplement. Examination of health care and income trends since 1993 indicates that the findings are still relevant.

The executive summary and full text copy of the report are available on the Internet at *fatherhood.hhs.gov*. □

New National CSE Strategic Plan

We are pleased to report that the strategic plan for FY 2000-2004 is now in place. In June, the state/federal partners reached consensus on the new plan at the annual meeting of the states' child support directors. Said OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross on releasing the plan, "We would like to thank everyone involved in the development of the plan. We continue to appreciate the wonderful work of the nation's child support partnership on behalf of America's children."

"This plan gives us a solid blueprint for success."

Mary Ann Wellbank

Added Mary Ann Wellbank, President of the National Council of Child Support Directors, "We will continue to face many challenges in the years ahead, but this plan gives us a solid blueprint for success."

OCSE and its state partners originally developed a 1995-1999 strategic plan as part of a pilot project under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA). That plan served as the foundation for the performance-based incentive and penalty systems and revised data reporting and set a new direction for the child support program.

Five years have passed since that first plan was developed and the child support enforcement program has continued to grow and change. This new plan with its revised mission, vision, goals, objectives, and indicators will provide a common path for the course of the program for the next five years.□

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Tribal Program Rules Issued

HHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala has announced the publication of new regulations to implement direct child support enforcement (CSE) program funding to federally recognized Indian tribes and tribal organizations. The regulations carry out provisions of the 1996 welfare reform law as amended by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, which for the first time provided the option of direct funding of tribal CSE programs. "We are committed," said OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross, "to helping those tribes that choose to run their own programs be successful. And we're putting federal dollars behind that commitment."

Two rules were published. The interim final rule, effective immediately, applies to Indian tribes and tribal organizations currently operating comprehensive CSE programs. The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking proposes new rules that will allow most Indian tribes and tribal organizations not currently operating comprehensive child support programs to do so in the future with direct funding.

Under the new regulations, HHS can make direct payments for administrative expenses to tribes, tribal organizations, and Alaskan Native villages that demonstrate their capacity to operate a CSE program. Tribes will have to meet the objectives of the program, including establishment of paternity; modification and enforcement of support orders; collection and distribution of support; and location of noncustodial parents.

Initially, the Federal Government will pay 90 percent of reasonable and necessary costs of the programs.

Currently, 15 tribes in eight states are running their own child support programs, either through demonstration grants or cooperative agreements with states, and handling about 20,000 cases. In the development of the interim and proposed rules, HHS consulted extensively with tribes in meetings across the country. Many tribes expressed interest in developing and operating their own child support enforcement program.

To obtain input on the regulations, HHS will hold additional consultations during the 120 day comment period. The locations, dates, and times of these consultations will be announced in a separate notice in the Federal Register, which will be mailed to tribes, states, and interested parties.□

In Illinois, Birth Certificate Registrars Help Strengthen Parent-Child Bonds

By: Lisa Spengler

Every day, Denise Andrews and Pat Hayes make a lasting impression on a child's life. Sometimes all it takes is a short conversation with a child's parents or a phone call to a baby's father. Through these and other measures, Andrews and Hayes, birth certificate registrars, are helping to strengthen parent-child bonds for the future.

Each day either Andrews or Hayes meets with mothers who recently gave birth at Chicago Lying-in Hospital. They interview moms to determine what information will appear on a birth certificate and to assist with other necessary papers, like applications for Social Security cards. Andrews and Hayes are an unbiased resource for families with questions and concerns after the birth of a child. They also work closely with Hospitals' social workers to make sure new mothers and fathers receive the services they deserve.

To Andrews and Hays, a birth certificate is much more than paper and ink. "The birth certificate is the only document you have from the day you're born to the day you die," Hayes says. "So it's very important that it's been done correctly."

A birth certificate can help a child receive important entitlements like medical and financial support from both parents. Also, a birth certificate is a legal document that can indicate paternity when a child is born to unwed parents.

The majority of fathers are enthusiastic to establish paternity and are eager to be involved in the lives of their children.

As birth certificate registrars, a major part of Andrews' and Hayes' work is to encourage parents of children born out of wedlock to legally establish paternity. Andrews and Hayes do so through a special program called Project HOPE (Hospital Opportunity for Paternity Establishment) that was created by the Illinois Department of Public Aid. Through Project HOPE, the registrars work with couples to fill out the necessary forms that establish voluntary legal paternity.

Both Andrews and Hayes believe that Project HOPE has affected the lives of thousands of families since its inception at the Hospitals more than four years ago. They report that the majority of fathers are enthusiastic to establish paternity and are eager to be involved in the lives of their children.

"Establishing paternity creates a special sense of belonging for a child," Andrews says. It's a legal way of saying that both parents want and love a child, she notes. "This will also allow the child to be eligible for his or her father's Social Security benefits, Veterans' benefit, life insurance, and other benefits if the legal father dies or becomes disabled," Andrews says. "It's important for a child to know both sides of his or her heritage for many reasons that go beyond financial responsibilities," Hayes adds. "Children should know both sides of their family for medical, physical, mental, and spiritual reasons."

Andrews and Hayes often encounter economic, educational, language, and religious barriers when working with families. They often go the extra mile to reach out to families who require special services. Both Andrews and Hayes recently completed a course in Spanish to improve accessibility to Hispanic families, and they regularly work extra hours to be available to families. Andrews' and Hayes' hard work has not gone unnoticed. They have been recognized statewide as one of the top Project HOPE programs. In the past, they have been invited to speak at events to share their successful methods with other Illinois birth certificate registrars.

Both Andrews and Hayes theorize that their success comes from a love for working with people, an eye for detail, and a genuine interest in helping others. "We're both 'people' persons," Andrews says. "And we love working together."□

Reprinted, with permission, from the April, 2000 issue of the University of Chicago Hospitals and Health System publication, Tablet.

Working for Kids in Wake County, North Carolina

By: Lisa A. Roue

The Working for Kids program, a federally funded Welfare-to-Work program that serves Wake County, North Carolina, was implemented in the spring of 1999. It serves noncustodial parents whose children receive public assistance and who face barriers to employment, including: limited education, poor work history, substance abuse problems, homelessness, and ex-offender status.

The goals of the Working for Kids program are: (1) to assist noncustodial parents who are unemployed or underemployed in obtaining employment with wages high enough to support themselves and to make required child support and arrearage payments; and (2) to help clients become more involved emotionally with their children.

Referrals come from a variety of sources, including the courts, the Child Support Enforcement (CSE) office, program literature, word-of-mouth, Wake County Human Services programs, and community organizations. Case managers attend court sessions each Wednesday to recruit new clients, to support and advocate for the clients they are working with, and to screen and assess those individuals the judges and/or the CSE attorneys refer to the program.

Case managers work one-on-one with clients to determine needs, set goals, and provide support and referrals. Services include screening and assessment, intensive case management, job readiness training, job placement, support groups, skills training, budget counseling, job retention, and support services. In addition, referrals for legal services, educational/vocational training, mediation services, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, and health services are provided as needed.

In preparation for obtaining full-time, unsubsidized employment, clients may elect to participate in work experience or on-the-job-training activities. After obtaining unsubsidized employment, participants can receive assistance in continuing their education by going back to school or enrolling in a training program.

In working with noncustodial parents, Working for Kids has learned that it is essential to build a collaborative relationship with CSE and the courts. By forming these partnerships, programs can deal with all aspects of a noncustodial parent's situation.

Working for Kids has had a successful first year, due in large part to these established relationships. Examples of the program's success include:

- 25 of 54 currently enrolled participants are employed with an average hourly wage of $8.20;
- 20 have maintained 13 or more consecutive weeks of employment;
- 9 have jobs with benefits; and
- 23 have begun making regular child support payments.

Benefits to Participants

- Becoming better informed about the child support enforcement program and in some cases receiving more lenient sentencing (to give them time to "get back on their feet" with the support of their case managers);
- Obtaining full-time employment. Several have participated in paid work experience and on-the-job training activities; many have improved their housing situations. Others are enrolled in occupational training pro-

Continued on page 7, "Kids."

Child Support Children First

CD-ROM Multimedia Training Courses in Texas

By: Ted N. White

States have now received the six CD-ROM based multimedia child support-training courses. (See May, 1999 *CSR* for more on these courses.) As a member of the National Child Support Enforcement Training Work Group, I want to share the issues we encountered in Texas in getting the courses into production:

- Justifying and obtaining computer speakers;
- Installing a necessary software application; and
- Copying the CDs.

With more than 2,000 child support employees in 70 locations, we needed to wait until the first CD was received and tested before we could justify the purchase of computer speakers. We knew that if we liked the courses, each child support office would need a set of all six CDs, and we were fortunate to have in-house capability to make copies of each.

In April 1999, we received the first course (Orientation). We quickly tested it and decided we would be able to use it as part of our formal training program. This supported the justification to purchase speakers and recordable CDs.

Also, with receipt of the Orientation CD, we learned that each course requires a small software application called QuickTime to be installed on the PC hard drive.

Although the CDs contain the necessary files and setup program, our system of centrally managed and networked PCs does not allow users to install any software applications. The centralized Information Technology staff had to test the compatibility of the QuickTime application, then devise a plan to install QuickTime on every PC by a centrally managed software roll out.

In October 1999, the speakers and blank CDs were received and the plan for installing QuickTime was ready. Meanwhile, the second, third and fourth courses (Paternity, UIFSA and Enforcement) were received.

With the software issue resolved, we authorized the copying of the CDs. When we tried to do so, we discovered a software problem with our CD-ROM copier.

In November 1999, we received the fifth course (Locate). With the CD-ROM copier finally ready, we decided to wait for the sixth and final CD to be received so we could send each location a full set of all six courses.

The last course CD, Distribution, arrived in January 2000. The CD copying was completed and speakers were sent to each unit. But it took two more days for staff from the training section to label the CD copies, insert copies of the inserts into plastic cases, and organize the packets for shipping.

In January 2000, we provided a set of all six courses to each child support office, to each regional administrative office, and to each regional trainer. (Extra sets are maintained at our State central office to be checked out as needed.)

These six modules are now being used to give new employees a high-level program orientation. We are editing existing course listings to indicate when the new OCSE courses should be used as prerequisites for additional classroom training.

If you would like more information about how Texas is using these CBT courses, contact Ted White at (512) 460-6515.□

Ted White is an Assistant Attorney General in the General Counsel Section of the Child Support Division of the Office of the Attorney General of Texas and Co-Chair of the National Child Support Enforcement Training Work Group.

Kids

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grams, and nearly all have improved their job readiness, job search, and job retention skill levels; and

- Being provided the opportunity to set up payment plans to tackle current obligations and arrearages.

The long-term impact on participants' lives and on their children is potentially immense.

If you would like more information about Working for Kids, contact Lisa Rowe at (919) 212-9346.□

Lisa Rowe is Wake County Program Coordinator for the Working for Kids Program.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Child Support Report

Medical Support Order Report Sent to Congress

The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Labor recently forwarded to Congress a report by the Medical Child Support Working Group that contains recommendations to attempt to expand health coverage for children eligible for child support enforcement activities. The report, *Twenty One Million Children's Health: Our Shared Responsibility*, responds to the Working Group's statutory mandate to identify and provide recommendations to address barriers to the effective enforcement of medical support by state child support enforcement agencies.

Medical support orders, which provide for children's health care coverage, may require noncustodial parents to include their children under their employment-based health insurance coverage. They may be established and enforced with the help of state child support enforcement agencies.

Copies of the 260 page report, as well as questions and answers regarding its findings, are available on the HHS Web site at:

http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/news.☐

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Vol. XXII, No. 10, October 2000

HHS Awards New Funds for Innovative Child Support Projects

HHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala recently announced the award of more than $1.1 million in demonstration grants to states for funding innovative projects to promote the objectives of the nation's child support enforcement program. The grants provide a wide opportunity to test new methods to enhance the child support enforcement program through the development of a fresh knowledge base.

"The child support program has made great strides for millions of children," said OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross, "but there is always more to learn and do. We are excited about these new grants."

Seventeen grants were awarded to 12 states. Funding for the 17-month grants was made available under the authority of Title IV-D and Section 1115 of the Social Security Act.

The projects and grant amounts by state

Arizona ($50,000) will enhance its medical support order establishment.

California ($50,000) will improve outreach and services to urban Hispanics.

Connecticut ($50,000) will improve child support program outcomes through the development of a partnership executive council involving the courts, the attorney general, and the Bureau of Child Support.

Maryland ($49,979) will continue to develop a program of certification of its child support workers.

Maine ($134,640) will enhance the use of community resource networks to reach out to noncustodial parents to ascertain their financial circumstances.

> *"The child support program has made great strides for millions of children, but there is always more to learn and do."*
>
> .....*OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross*

Massachusetts ($167,748) will pilot a project to develop methods of identification and coordination related to inmates and offenders with child support obligations.

Minnesota ($150,000) will test ways to increase the medical coverage of children through outreach, referrals, and direct enrollment; strengthen its voluntary paternity establishment activities for nonEnglish speaking parents; and look at ways to get more money to families.

Montana ($50,000) will develop data on the costs of raising children, targeted to that State.

New Jersey ($47,500), through intense outreach, will improve establishment of medical support orders.

Puerto Rico ($145,000) will enhance the use of automated processes to reduce errors and paperwork.

Virginia ($120,265) will enhance its Project Save Our Children law enforcement collaboration activities.

Washington ($50,000) will study ways to improve its child support guideline schedules so that payments are made more regularly.

West Virginia ($50,000) will develop multi-media approaches to encourage teens to practice abstinence and avoid teenage pregnancy. □

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U.S. Department of
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Cost Avoidance and State Financing Variables' Effect on Performance

Two recent research studies funded by OCSE contain information of importance to caseworkers and managers. A brief summary of each report's main findings follows.

The Potential of the Child Support Enforcement (CSE) Program to Avoid Costs to Public Programs: A Review and Synthesis of Literature (The Lewin Group with Johns Hopkins University).

Findings

- Previous estimates of cost avoidance are outdated, difficult to compare, and cannot be generalized. Some previous studies may only apply to one state, and all suffer from data limitations and methodological problems.
- The potential for cost avoidance is unknown. The potential for improved collections may be mitigated by the inability of many of the poorest noncustodial parents to pay support.
- Studies of child support review and adjustment efforts that avoided government costs in public assistance cases may be outdated by new changes in the caseload caused by TANF programs.
- A small number of studies indicate that child support has, at most, a limited indirect effect on marital and childbearing behavior of parents.
- The Urban Institute's Transfer Income Model (TRIM) is the only current major microsimulation model with the capacity to measure child support cost avoidance.

While state child support program administrative data, merged with data from other agencies, are potentially a rich source of data to estimate cost avoidance, recent state studies have limitations.

Preliminary Assessment of the Associations Between State Child Support Enforcement Performance and Financing Structure (The Lewin Group with ECONorthwest)

States may face tradeoffs in attempting to maximize their overall performance in the incentive measures, especially with regard to the cost-effectiveness measure.

Findings

- A greater reliance on general fund appropriations may be associated with somewhat better performance.
- Several factors related to the structure of the child support program appear to be related to CSE performance.
- Several demographic factors outside the domain of the child support program also appear to be related to CSE performance.
- States may face tradeoffs in attempting to maximize their overall performance in the incentive measures, especially with regard to the cost-effectiveness measure.
- Other than tradeoffs associated with cost-effectiveness, it does not appear that improvement on one incentive measure automatically translates into either an improvement or worsening of another measure. Exceptions include a positive and strong correlation between the paternity establishment percentage and percent of cases with orders and a positive but weaker correlation between the percent of cases with orders and the collection rate for current support.

The complete reports are available on OCSE's Website at: **www.acf.dhhs.gov/offices/ocse.**□

How to Obtain Military Information

By: Marilyn Michaels

On July 1, 2000, active duty members of the military received a pay adjustment, which amounted to a raise for most members. A new pay chart can be found on the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) web site at **www.dfas.mil.**

The web site contains other information on military pay and allowances, plus garnishment of active duty/retired/reserve/Department of Defense (DoD) civilian pay at **www.dfas.mil/money/garnish/index.htm.**

When military members retire from active duty, garnishments may need to be re-started, as they generally do not carry over to retired pay. If you are aware of a noncustodial parent in this situation, you need to inform DFAS so it can re-start the garnishment. Be sure to have the military member's Social Security number when contacting DFAS. The customer service phone number at DFAS is (216) 522-5301; the fax number that goes directly to its imaging system is (216) 522-6960.

Be sure to have the military member's Social Security number when contacting DFAS

Most DoD civilians and all military members' garnishment actions are served on DFAS. A comprehensive listing of all federal employer agents for purposes of service of process can be found at **http://frwebgate.2.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/multidb.cgi** (select #10, then Text; 5 CFR §581 at Appendix A).

Freedom of Information Act

When requesting information from DFAS or one of the military services, cite the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Examples of FOIA requests are found at Appendix B (military worldwide locator services) and Appendix F (requests for pay information) of the OCSE publication, *A Caseworker's Guide to Child Support Enforcement and Military Personnel*, (February 2000).

The publication is available through the OCSE National Reference Center and also can be accessed on the OCSE Web Page.

Using a format other than an FOIA request may result in the request being returned to the caseworker, possibly with a referral to send it to a different address. When requesting employment verification from DFAS, caseworkers should ask for copies of the member's Leave and Earnings Statement to gain a complete picture of the service member's pay.

Internet Information

Each service has a web site: **www.army.mil; www.af.mil; www.navy.mil; www.usmc.mil;** and **www.uscg.mil.**

Those needing information regarding the Veterans Administration can go to **www.va.gov.** Keep in mind that most Veterans Administration entitlements cannot be garnished. Many active duty sailors can be located by checking **http://directory.navy.mil,** though the addresses of Navy personnel overseas must be requested in writing as they are not available over the Internet.

Military members stationed overseas generally have an address containing an APO or FPO number. The last line of the address will be APO (or FPO), either AE or AP or AA, then a zip code number. If you want to know where the member is stationed, a good listing of APO and FPO locations (in numerical order, by zip code) can be found at **www.web7.whs.osd.mil/html/45261l.htm.**

For information on service of process overseas, refer to the Department of State Home Page, Children's Issues section, at **www.travel.state.gov.** Forms and regulations issued by DoD may be accessed at **http://web7.whs.osd.mil/dodiss/links.htm.** The DoD directive that addresses leave issues involving the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act may be found at **www.web7.whs.osd.mil/text/d13275p.txt.**

If you have any questions regarding military members and child support, you may contact Marilyn Michaels at (808) 692-7139, or by e-mail at **mmichael@pixi.com** or **mmichaels@acf.dhhs.gov.**□

Marilyn Michaels is OCSE Military Liaison Officer.

Child Support Course for Employers on Small Business Web

To expand its outreach effort to six million small business employers, OCSE has collaborated with the Small Business Administration (SBA) by placing a new online course, entitled *Child Support Enforcement and the Small Business Employer: What Every Employer Needs to Know About Child Support*, in SBA's web-based classroom. Since most small business employers have neither the time nor the financial capability to attend workshops and conferences, this online course gives them the information they need, when and where they need it, free of cost.

The online course presents the highlights of employers' responsibilities.

It also serves child support professionals and attorneys who want to review the basic responsibilities and practices of the employer community with respect to child support.

The online course presents the highlights of employers' responsibilities. The course includes a downloadable version of the standardized Order/Notice to Withhold Income for Child Support. Also provided are a quick self-test, glossary, and list of additional online resources.

Appealing graphics, voice-over narration and video clips make this an interesting site for employers to visit. A text-only version of the course is available for employers with minimal technology.

The website can be accessed from: **http://www.sba.gov/classroom/courses.html.**

If you would like more information, contact OCSE's Carol Callahan at (202) 401-6969. □

Fatherhood Initiative in New Jersey

By: Joe Travea

New Jersey Governor Christie Whitman and Department of Human Services Commissioner Michele K. Guhl recently joined several retired professional football players and their community service organization to remind fathers of their emotional and financial responsibility to their children.

The Governor joined with members of Minority Athletes Networking Inc. (MAN Inc.) in support of several initiatives to promote responsible fatherhood. These included unveiling of new advertising for the Office of Child Support's Learning, Investing, and Networking for Kids Sake (LINKS) public awareness program and the awards ceremony for the winners of New Jersey's Sixth Annual Teen Parental Responsibility media contest.

"Parents owe their children two fundamental things," the Governor said. "The first is adequate financial support. The second and equally important thing is the commitment to emotional support—to be there for them in both good times and not so good times."

"I want to commend the founders and members of Man Inc.," the Governor continued, "for the work they do to encourage youth in minority communities to seek academic and career success and to be responsible citizens."

Joining the Governor and Commissioner for the ceremony were James DiEleuterio, New Jersey Sports President Exposition Authority; Sam Nails, Executive Director of Man Inc.; and former New York Giants' players Ron Johnson and Zeke Mowatt.

Man Inc. was founded in 1989 by Ron Johnson and George Martin, also a former player for the New York Giants, to create a networking of retired and professional athletes from New Jersey who could offer services, mentoring, and support to New Jersey's urban minority communities.

For more information on this event, or about New Jersey's child support public awareness campaign, contact Joe Travea at (609) 588-7867. □

Joe Travea is Public Awareness Coordinator of New Jersey's Child Support Program.

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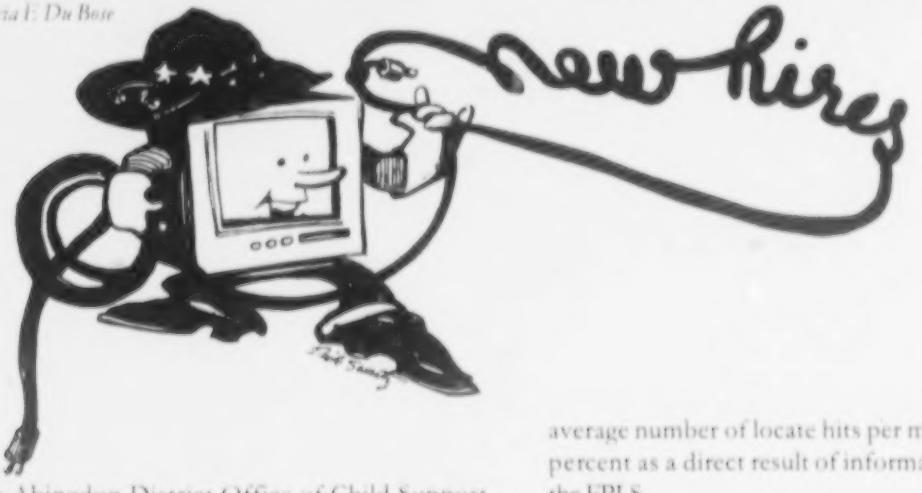
Virginia's Abingdon District Office Benefits from NDNH and Federal Case Registry Data

By: Patricia E. DuBose



The Abingdon District Office of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE) is bordered by West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and North Carolina. Its location and high levels of poverty and unemployment--characteristic of rural Appalachia--ensure a high level of interstate cases. In fact, interstate cases make up more than 30 percent of Abingdon DCSE's caseload.

In December 1998, Virginia's automated child support enforcement system began displaying data from the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH). The data included new hire, quarterly wage, and unemployment insurance information from other states. For DCSE Abingdon, the result was an immediate identification of approximately 3,000 employers belonging to cases assigned to DCSE's Enforcement Unit.

Over the next three months, the DCSE continuously prepared income withholdings on the noncustodial parents for these cases. With the help of the NDNH, the DCSE's income withholdings have risen from an average of $357 to $541 per month—a 52 percent increase—over the past two fiscal years. The DCSE's collections have increased by 30 percent during the same period. Prior to using the information from the NDNH, the DCSE averaged a 7 percent increase per year, with the highest increase being 10 percent in one year.

The use of the Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS)—which houses both the Federal Case Registry (FCR) and the NDNH—as a locate tool, has been a benefit since its inception. For child support districts with high out-of-state caseloads, that benefit increases proportionally. From fiscal years 1998-2000, Abingdon DCSE's average number of locate hits per month increased 135 percent as a direct result of information received from the FPLS.

The value of FPLS data to Abingdon DCSE's Establishment Unit also has been significant. Using the State's Administrative Process, DCSE can, when appropriate, administratively establish paternity and support orders, and enforce orders without involving the court system.

In 1997, Abingdon DCSE had the highest number of cases needing establishment (excluding paternity) of all the State's districts. With over 7,600 cases requiring establishment of orders, 3,000 of those cases had out-of-state noncustodial parents. The FPLS provided DCSE's Establishment Unit with the locate and earnings data required for the preparation of Administrative Support Orders on noncustodial parents who could not provide the necessary financial statements.

The data received from the FPLS is also useful in hard-to-enforce cases. The absence of employer information and quarterly wage data for certain individuals on the FPLS helps identify those cases that should be checked against IRS 1099 data for other sources of income, such as self-employment, retirement pensions, stocks, and Social Security benefits.

Nick Young, Virginia's Child Support Director, notes that "Virginia recognized early on what a valuable tool the FPLS would be. I asked all offices to place a priority on using the new data. Abingdon has done an excellent job of doing just that."

For more information contact Pat DuBose at 540-676-5495.□

Patricia DuBose is District Manager of the Child Support Office in Abingdon, Virginia.

Conference Calendar

October

16-18 *ACF Users' Group, Holiday Inn at the Bay*, San Diego, CA, Robin Rushton (202) 690-1244.

17-19 *Welfare-to-Work Beyond 2000: Building the Future*, Hyatt Regency Phoenix, Phoenix, AZ, Kelly Lynch (202) 219-0024 X 188.

18-20 *Nebraska CSE Association 19th Annual Training Conference*, Holiday Inn, Kearney, NE, Colleen Lembke (308) 534-4350 X 205.

22-24 *South Carolina Fall 2000 Conference*, Landmark Hotel, Myrtle Beach, SC, Michael Thigpen (803) 898-9450.

23 *Indiana Fathers and Families Conference*, Westin Hotel, Indianapolis, IN, Joseph Mamlin (317) 233-4482.

24-26 *Public Consultation on Proposed Tribal Regulations*, Holiday Inn – Downtown Anchorage, Anchorage, AK, Virginia Apodaca (202) 401-9376.

26-28 *Social Commission on the Status of Black Men National Conference*, Adams Mark Hotel Downtown, Indianapolis, IN, Stephen Jackson (317) 233-1744.

November

1-2 *Public Consultation on Proposed Tribal Regulations*, Holiday Inn Rosslyn at Key Bridge, Arlington, VA, Virginia Apodaca (202) 401-9376.

8-9 *Oklahoma CSE Association Fall Conference*, Marriott Hotel, Oklahoma City, OK, Barbara Hatfield (405) 262-8789.

14-17 *Missouri CSE Association Conference*, Tan-Tar-A Resort, Osage Beach, MO, Marla Ashley (573) 751-2648.

15-17 *New England Child Support Regional Conference*, Sheraton-Hyannis Hotel, Hyannis, MA Chris Arciero (617) 565-2472.

28-30 *Public Consultation on Proposed Tribal Regulations*, Crown Plaza Hotel, Phoenix, AZ, Virginia Apodaca (202) 401-9376.

December

5-7 *Tenth Annual Tribal Grantee Conference*, Marriott Hotel, Sea/Tac, WA, George Lund (206) 615-2550 X 3053. □

Arizona Has Success with MSFIDM

By: Mark Bluemke

Since the first of the year, Arizona, through the use of the Multistate Financial Institution Data Match (MSFIDM), has seized and collected just under $500,000 in past due child support. Using FIDM and MSFIDM as an enforcement tool has enabled us to increase our child support collections on many difficult cases.

Our first success story involves a custodial parent who had not received any child support on her case for years. We were able to seize $27,000 from the noncustodial parent's account. After we distributed the money to the custodial parent, she held the check for over two weeks, unable to believe that she was finally getting the money owed for so long to her and her children.

Using FIDM and MSFIDM as an enforcement tool has enabled us to increase our child support collections on many difficult cases.

On another case, we seized over $10,000 from an account. Two months later the noncustodial parent came into the office with a check for $12,000 to pay off the remainder of the arrearages.

MSFIDM has provided us with many lump-same payments; also, it has enabled us to collect money we otherwise might not have been able to collect. In more than 70 percent of the cases in which we have seized money from accounts, we have been able in subsequent months to collect all or part of the entire obligation. For more information about MSFIDM in Arizona, contact Mark Bluemke at (623) 842-1070 extension 6603. □

Mark Bluemke is MSFIDM Coordinator for Arizona's Child Support Program.

Child Support Children First

Working Out of Poverty

The following is excerpted from Working Out of Poverty: Employment Retention and Career Advancement for Welfare Recipients, *by Rebecca Brown, Evelyn Ganzglass, Susan Golonka, Jill Hyland, and Martin Simon, published by the Policy Studies Division of the National Governors' Association Center for Best Practices. While not specific to child support enforcement, the report spotlights an issue that is important to child support workers: the connection between good paying jobs and the ability of noncustodial parents to make regular child support payments.*

A work first approach to welfare reform should not simply be about placing welfare recipients in entry-level jobs. It should be about helping people with limited skills, work history, and education turn every job into a learning experience that leads to a higher paying job. To meet this challenge, states should complement strategies that help welfare recipients get jobs as quickly as possible with ones that work with them and their employers after they start work. Providing effective job retention and career advancement services requires establishing much closer relationships with employers.

The report spotlights an issue that is important to child support workers: the connection between good paying jobs and the ability of noncustodial parents to make regular child support payments.

It also requires integrating employability development efforts across welfare, workforce, education, and economic development systems to strengthen state capacity for helping low-income workers retain and succeed in their jobs.

Recommendations

To promote job retention among low-income workers, states should work with employers to:

- Increase access to and awareness of work-related supports, such as transportation, child care, and health care;
- Modify employee assistance programs to better aid low-income workers;
- Launch more aggressive efforts to promote earned income tax credits;
- Train supervisors to help them respond to the problems of low-income employees; and
- Help recipients who lose jobs become reemployed quickly.

To promote career advancement among low-income workers, states should:

- Improve access to career ladders;
- Work with employers to promote learning at the workplace;
- Identify employers and labor market sectors that provide career advancement opportunities for employees; and
- Make education and training compatible with employment.

For more information, or a copy of the report, contact John Thomasian, Director, NGA Center for Best Practices, at (202) 624-5300.□

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PRWORA Certification Guide Update

Twenty states have now had either full or incremental PRWORA certification reviews and another 19 have requested reviews over the next three months.

Twenty states have now had either full or incremental PRWORA certification reviews.

A revised version of the PRWORA Certification Guide has been issued as Action Transmittal (AT) 00-07, dated August 28, 2000. It is on the OCSE Web page at:

www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse/stsys/tab3.htm

Another new publication available on the OCSE Web page is "Cost Benefit Analysis Illustrated for Child Support Systems," with spreadsheets and a help guide. ☐

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Vol. XXII, No. 11, November 2000

Child Support Celebrates Silver Anniversary

OCSE's Tenth National Child Support Enforcement Training Conference, held in Baltimore, Maryland, September 25 – 27, drew more than 600 participants to celebrate 25 years of program success. Opening ceremonies addressed the theme of "25 Years of Giving Hope and Support to America's Children" and highlighted the history and accomplishments of the Child Support Enforcement Program.

A variety of workshops over the three days gave participants a chance to interact with their peers from around the country. Topics included interstate, caseload demographics, welfare-to-work, certification for CSE workers, data reliability audits, security, medical child support, systems, tribal regulations, best practices, and many others.

In his keynote address, OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross reviewed the "twenty-five truly productive years since the beginning of the CSE Program" and cited numerous personal highlights. "I wanted to accomplish three things when I took this job," he said. "To make the support of children a national priority; to make OCSE a visible agency; and to help the states run effective, successful child support programs. While there will always be room for improvement, I think we're well along the road to all three."

The Commissioner remarked also on how the culture of the agency has changed under his leadership, how it has become more inclusive and welcoming to those who would like to share the struggle with us but who were in past years sometimes overlooked. "When I first came to OCSE," he said, "I placed a banner over my office door that said, 'Children First.' It's still there to remind each of us that we have just one job to do and that is to give hope and support to America's children. The rest will follow."

OCSE Commissioner David Gray Ross addresses Silver Anniversary Conference.

Speaking to an audience representing 40 states and jurisdictions, Commissioner Ross said, "I am sincerely proud of the work you do, but despite our achievements we cannot rest." He challenged his audience to work together "to ensure that all our Nation's children have the financial and emotional support they need and deserve."

Assistant Secretary for Families and Children Olivia A. Golden later addressed the group. Calling the conference "a celebration of our success and a challenge for the future," the Assistant Secretary called attention to five policies that have contributed significantly to program accomplishments: Children First, staffing teams, partnerships, technology, and training.

Continued on page 2, "Silver."

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U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement

Silver

Continued from page 1.

Anne Donovan, Deputy Director of the White House Millennium Council and a former OCSE Assistant Commissioner, read a letter from the President to conference participants expressing his appreciation for their work and congratulating them on their success (see below for full text of the letter).

For more information about the Tenth National Training Conference, or other OCSE training initiatives, contact the National Training Center's Brenda James at bjames1@acf.dhhs.gov.□

President Salutes Child Support Program's Achievements

The White House
Washington
September 22, 2000

Warm greetings to everyone gathered in Baltimore for the 10th National Child Support Enforcement Training Conference. I am pleased to join you in celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Child Support Enforcement Program and in paying tribute to David Gray Ross, whose leadership has been instrumental in the program's extraordinary success.

For 25 years, our nation's Child Support Enforcement Program has played a vital role in ensuring that all our children have the chance they deserve in life—the chance to reach their full potential.

Children are our greatest hope and our most profound responsibility. Only when all our young people are provided with the best care and support possible can we truly say that we are prepared for the challenges of the 21st century.

Unfortunately, too many of our children suffer needlessly because of parents who have not fulfilled their responsibility to provide basic economic support for their children. Millions of these young people are being forced to grow up in poverty, and their chances to lead full and happy lives are compromised.

For 25 years, our nation's Child Support Enforcement Program has played a vital role in ensuring that all our children have the chance they deserve in life—the chance to reach their full potential. Each of you can take great pride in your dedicated efforts in this endeavor. Your commitment to making sure that parents honor their responsibilities to their own children has helped increase total child support collections nearly every year. In the past year alone, collections increased 10 percent, double what they were in 1992.

These collections have helped open for millions of our nation's children and families doors of opportunity that would otherwise remain closed.

In addition to the funds you have helped families collect, you have also helped to foster strong families and responsible parenting. We've known for a long time now that students do better in school and later in life when their parents are more actively involved in their learning, and that the involvement of fathers during their children's infancy and early childhood years also contributes to their sons' and daughters' emotional security and intellectual development.

While we have made great progress in ensuring that both fathers and mothers provide their children with the emotional and financial support they need to thrive, we still have more to do, and I look forward to future progress on such issues as ensuring that all children born out-of-wedlock have paternity established, that more child support goes directly to families, and that we do everything we can to help low-income fathers work and support their families.

As we move forward in our efforts on behalf of America's children, I'm grateful for all your hard work and the efforts of the 60,000 child support workers you represent. What you do each day matters enormously, and I extend my appreciation and thanks.

Best wishes for a productive conference.□

Bill Clinton

Census Bureau Reports That More Custodial Parents Receive Full Amount of Child Support

The proportion of custodial parents receiving all the child support payments they were due increased from 34 percent in 1993 to 41 percent in 1997, according to a recent Census Bureau Report. Another 27 percent of custodial parents received partial payments in 1997, down from 35 percent in 1993.

Overall, two-thirds of custodial parents due child support in 1997 received either full or partial payments, unchanged since 1993. The average amount of child support received by these custodial parents was $3,600, also unchanged since 1993.

The proportion of custodial parents receiving all the child support payments they were due increased from 34 percent in 1993 to 41 percent in 1997.

The proportion of custodial parents with full-time, year-round jobs increased from 46 percent to 51 percent between 1993 and 1997. The poverty rate for custodial parents declined between 1993 and 1997 (from 33 percent to 29 percent), as did the incidence of participating in a public assistance program (from 41 percent to 34 percent).

Other Report Highlights

- As of spring 1998, an estimated 14.0 million parents had custody of 22.9 million children under 21 years of age whose other parent lived elsewhere; 85 percent of these parents were mothers;
- Payment of full or partial child support was most likely when the noncustodial parent had arrangements for joint child custody and visitation. About 83 percent of custodial parents with these arrangements received full or partial support payments, as opposed to 36 percent for those without either shared custody or visitation. The 7.0 million custodial parents with agreements or current child support awards received an aggregate of $17.1 billion, or 59 percent, of the $29.1 billion in child support. Custodial mothers received a greater proportion of the total they were due than did custodial fathers (60 percent versus 48 percent);
- About 7.9 million custodial parents (56 percent) had some type of support agreement or award for their children in 1998. This group comprised 59 percent of custodial mothers and 38 percent of custodial fathers; and
- More than half (56 percent) of all custodial parents received some type of noncash support (gifts, clothes, food) from noncustodial parents for their children. □

These data were collected from the April 1994, 1996, and 1998 supplements to the Current Population Survey co-sponsored by the DHHS Office of Child Support Enforcement.

Final Tribal Consultation

The fourth and last Tribal CSE consultation on the Proposed Rule and Interim Final Rule for operating Tribal Child Support Enforcement programs will be held November 28 - 30, 2000. The event will take place in Phoenix, Arizona, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

All interested parties are invited to attend these public consultations. For hotel reservations, call (602) 333-0000. For more information about the consultations, call Virginia Apodaca at (202) 401-9376. □

Parent Responsibility Employment Program Produces Results in Mesa County, CO

By: Janet Hamilton

Mesa County's Parental Responsibility Employment Program (PREP) is designed to provide employment and/or training services and counseling to noncustodial parents in an effort to help them meet their child support obligations and build positive relationships with their children.

The Colorado County's Human Services child support and workforce programs, led by the County Commissioners and Executive Director Thomas Papin, are working through PREP to reduce barriers faced by noncustodial parents in meeting their support obligations. Partnerships previously formed with Human Services and Hilltop Community Resources, a local nonprofit agency, have been enhanced to include the District Court and the local business community.

Services include employment training and placement, educational opportunities, counseling (drug and alcohol, credit, family) and addressing court actions against those individuals. The effort has resulted in improved relations among noncustodial parents, courts, former spouses, and child support staff.

The flexible nature of this cooperative venture is built upon the strengths and needs of the family and community. Employers are beginning to reap the benefit of a trained workforce, courts are less burdened, child support workers are seen as advocates, and parents are gaining financial independence. But children are enjoying the greatest gains, as parents meet their support obligations.

The flexible nature of this cooperative venture is built upon the strengths and needs of the family and community.

While PREP participants are given temporary suspension of interest accrued on arrears, they are required to pay current support (plus a minimum of $1 on arrears). Any failure results in immediate enforcement action.

In cases referred to PREP during FY 2000, 48 percent of participants are making regular monthly support payments, 41 percent make occasional payments, and 4 percent paid their arrears in full.

Employers are beginning to reap the benefits of a trained workforce, courts are less burdened, child support workers are seen as advocates, and parents are gaining financial independence.

In designing a much needed program that respects an individual's desire to be an active and responsible parent, Mesa County employees and business leaders have created a family-centered program that works—one that can be duplicated wherever a community spirit of cooperation motivates government to focus on uplifting individuals, strengthening families, and benefiting children.

For more information call Janet Hamilton at (970) 248-2787. □

Janet Hamilton is Mesa County, Colorado, Child Support Administrator.

Head Start Loses a Leader, Child Support a Friend

Helen Taylor, long-time director of the Head Start Bureau and a good friend of child support who did so much to bring the two programs together, passed away on October 3rd. Her compassion for children and concern for families in need were well known to all who had the pleasure of working with her.

An early promoter of collaboration between Head Start and child support, her efforts to strengthen the bonds between the two programs stand as a tribute to her leadership.

She will be missed. □

Interstate Training: the Controlling Order

By: Dianne Offett

While the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA) has been in place nationwide for several years, most interstate staff--when asked what is needed to improve interstate case processing--put training at the top of the list.

The Concept of One Controlling Order

At the heart of UIFSA is the concept of one-order-in time. That is, at any given time, there should be only one controlling order setting out the ongoing support obligation. So, in cases with multiple orders, child support professionals must work with state tribunals to sort through the existing orders and determine which one will be enforced in the future.

For some, however, the controlling order determination process can be confusing. Because of this and because of its importance, sessions on controlling order decision-making are routinely a part of national training conferences, such as OCSE's recent 10th National Training Conference, as well as many regional and state training meetings.

Interstate training sessions typically walk participants through the steps required to reach the one-order-in time that UIFSA requires for interstate cases.

Interstate training sessions typically walk participants through the steps required to reach the one-order-in time that UIFSA requires for interstate cases. To introduce the controlling order concept, participants are typically presented with a series of questions.

Questions to Answer in Determining the Controlling Order

- Where can you enforce an interstate order?
- Which order do you enforce?
- What types of orders are eligible for selection as the controlling order?

The key is to know how many orders are eligible to be the controlling order.

What If There Is More Than One Order?

It's easy if there is only one order: that's the controlling order. If there is more than one order, however, UIFSA sets out some straightforward rules to help you figure out which, if any, of the existing orders controls. But first you must know:

- What states issued the orders;
- The dates of the orders;
- Where the parties currently are living; and
- Where the child has been living for the period leading up to this decision.

At the heart of UIFSA is the concept of one-order-in time--the controlling order

With this information, you can determine the order to be used for ongoing support enforcement purposes.

Interstate training sessions also typically present information on the process for making—and the possible timing of—controlling order decisions. Because binding controlling order determinations must come from a state child support tribunal, participants examine IV-D and tribunal roles in both single-state and two-state actions.

Further, because the controlling order only settles the issue of prospective child support, training sessions also generally provide an overview of how to calculate arrears in cases with multiple valid orders.

To learn more about OCSE's interstate training and technical assistance efforts, contact Dianne Offett at (202) 401-5425.□

Dianne Offett is OCSE's Interstate Officer.

Preliminary Findings from the Wisconsin Child Support Demonstration Evaluation

In most states, children in families receiving TANF cash assistance do not benefit when their noncustodial fathers pay child support. What would happen if all child support paid on behalf of TANF children was passed through to the family and the TANF grant was not affected?

The State of Wisconsin decided to try to answer this question, and the Institute for Research on Poverty is conducting an evaluation of this reform. The evaluation compares outcomes for those who receive a full pass-through with those in a control group, who receive only a portion of what is paid, with the government retaining the balance.

Fathers of children in the full pass-through group are more likely to pay support than are fathers whose children would not get all the support they paid.

Key findings from the evaluation to date:

- As expected, mothers who are in the full pass-through group receive more child support;
- This increase in the incomes of economically vulnerable families comes at little or no overall government cost;
- Fathers of children in the full pass-through group are more likely to pay support than are fathers whose children would not get all the support they paid;
- Those in the control group in Wisconsin keep some child support paid on their behalf. Thus, researchers expect the increase in child support payments and receipts would be even greater in most other states—the majority of which currently retain all child support paid on behalf of TANF recipients; and
- The largest effects are for mothers who have not had recent TANF experience. This suggests a full pass-through policy might have larger effects in the future, because a greater proportion of the TANF caseload in Wisconsin and elsewhere will consist of new cases.

A final report from the experimental evaluation comparing a broad range of outcomes will be available in Spring, 2001, and a report that compares the results from the experimental evaluation with lessons learned from in-depth interviews with low-income fathers and with other nonexperimental analyses is scheduled for Fall, 2001.

For further information, contact the Project Manager, Emma Caspar (608) 265-4168 at the Institute for Research on Poverty; or the Principal Investigators, Dr. Daniel R. Meyer (608) 262-7336 and Dr. Maria Cancian (608) 265-9037; or the Project Officer, Barbara Kipp (608) 264-7737 at the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.□

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Tell Us How We Can Improve *Child Support Report*

Surely this is one of the most exciting times to be working in child support enforcement since the beginning of the program. The idea behind *Child Support Report* is to promote the interchange of news and ideas among federal, state, and local child support enforcement personnel.

Your opinion matters to us. Any comments, concerns, or compliments you can share with us will help us do a better job for you. Tell us how we can improve *CSR* to make it a more useful publication to your needs. Take a minute now to send a note to Phil Sharman, Editor, *Child Support Report*, 370 L'Enfant Promenade SW, 4th Floor, Washington, DC 20447. Or call him at (202) 401-4626.□

Child Support Children First

OCSE Responsible Fatherhood Programs Report

The report, *OCSE Responsible Fatherhood Programs: Early Implementation Lessons*, is a preliminary assessment of eight responsible fatherhood projects funded by OCSE from 1997 – 2001. The funded projects are in the states of California, Colorado, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, Washington, and Wisconsin.

Programs are collaborating with child support agencies in new ways to educate parents about the child support program, understand their cases and explore their options.

The report indicates that, through December 1999, approximately 1100 unemployed or underemployed fathers were assisted by these demonstrations through job and skills training, child support assistance, parental motivation, access and visitation, and various social services. A future report will evaluate the effectiveness of service delivery.

Based on discussions with program officials and staff, the following lessons concerning implementation of responsible fatherhood programs have been noted.

Findings

- Programs seeking to increase income and stimulate responsible fatherhood should serve a broad group of participants, be flexible about program design and recruitment, and generate services that match the needs of participants;
- While programs should take advantage of collaborations with other community agencies, staff must be knowledgeable about eligibility restrictions that may be in place in other program and funding sources;
- Services provided to project participants by outside agencies should be customized;
- Parents with a history of incarceration and other barriers face particular difficulties;
- Programs are collaborating with child support agencies in new ways to educate parents about the child support program, understand their cases and explore their options;
- Legal information and assistance on access, visitation, and child support have proven to be extremely popular at every site where they are offered;
- Peer support and case management help to cultivate the sense of concern and dignity that participants appreciate;
- Recruiting young or new fathers has proved to be difficult, but there is no single formula for recruitment and retention: many strategies and sources need to be used to attract participants;
- Referrals from child support agencies are an important source that should not be overlooked, though they should not be relied on as the only source; and
- Programs need to have dedicated and energetic staff who know about community services and are good at identifying resources.

For more information, contact David Arnaudo, Deputy Director of OCSE's Planning, Research and Evaluation Division, at (202) 401-5364.□

The report, OCSE Responsible Fatherhood Programs: Early Implementation Lessons, *was produced by the Center for Policy Research and Policy Studies, Inc., under contract to OCSE.*

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California Holds Customer Service Summit

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California's Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) hosted a Customer Service Summit September 14 – 15 in Sacramento, with statewide attendance from county program directors and other senior officials. Participants from Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, and OCSE also were invited to share their perspectives on customer service.

DCSS Director Curtis Child opened the summit by emphasizing his commitment to customer service and his belief that a service-oriented approach will ultimately lead to more dollars collected for children.

To establish a performance baseline, the Director indicated his intent to carry out a statewide customer service survey.

The State has set aside $25 million for local customer service initiatives, half of it to be used to establish an ombudsperson position in each county, the other half for local customer service initiatives.

Mr. Child encouraged participants to be innovative in their deliberations over the two days, to share best practices, and to debate and recommend allocation strategies for the available funding.

Among the topics considered by the groups were public outreach, complaint resolution, services to noncustodial parents, changing the public's perception of child support, and customer service best practices. ☐

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Child Support Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Vol. XXII, No. 12, December 2000

Detroit Lions Football Team Promotes Fatherhood

By: Eileen M. Schramben

For the sixth consecutive year, the Detroit Lions football organization teamed with the Michigan Family Independence Agency's Office of Child Support to launch a statewide fatherhood campaign. This year's campaign, "Fatherhood is Child's Play," focuses on increasing the involvement of fathers (whether married, divorced, or single) in their children's lives. Part of being a father includes spending time and playing with your children.

Michigan's fatherhood campaign is promoted through radio and television public service announcements, billboards, newspaper ads, posters, and calendars. Promotional items feature the players and their children and are distributed throughout the state.

Again this year, Lions defensive linemen Luther Elliss and Robert Porcher are the campaign spokesmen. Mr. Elliss is featured in *Huddle Up* promotional materials with his children Kaden, Olivia, Christian, and Isaiah. Mr. Porcher is featured in *My MVPs* promotional materials with his children Morgan and Robert IV.

This year several fathers identified by Wayne County Fatherhood Collaboration agencies and their children had the opportunity to personally meet Robert Porcher and Luther Elliss. Dads and their kids enjoyed the opportunity to play on the Lions football field, have photographs taken with the players, and get autographs. Several fathers with their children and families spent time together attending the October 8 game against Green Bay, compliments of Luther Elliss.

Huddle Up.
Office of Child Support
Fatherhood is Child's Play.
Olivia, Isaiah, Christian, Kaden & Luther Elliss
OCTOBER IS CHILD SUPPORT MONTH

The fatherhood campaign goal is to show the importance of family life and to encourage fathers—whether married, divorced or single—to become involved in their children's lives. Michigan's fatherhood campaign with the Detroit Lions—the first of its kind in the nation in 1995—has received two Emmy Awards for public service announcements and has been replicated by other National Football League and professional sports teams and their states. It has proven to be a popular and effective tool to promote the message of responsible fatherhood and the importance of developing family ties between fathers and children.

In June 2000, Robert Porcher was named a "Father of the Year" by the National Fatherhood Initiative. The

Continued on page 7, "Detroit Lions."

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U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Support Enforcement

Georgia's Genetic Testing Program

Before July of 1999, Georgia's 79 child support offices were each free to choose any of six different qualifying laboratories to do genetic testing to resolve paternity issues. The cost per test from these vendors varied only slightly, but turn-around times differed widely. And genetic testing statistics were more guesswork than factual.

In an effort to standardize and reduce genetic testing costs and to simplify billing and the acquisition of genetic testing statistics, Georgia child support, effective July 1, 1999, contracted with a firm to handle DNA paternity testing for all of its child support offices. The contract required:

- Genetic testing referrals to be transmitted electronically from a referring office directly to the contractor via a secure transmission;
- The contractor to be responsible for scheduling all the parties to be drawn for testing;
- The contractor, at local CSE office option, to be responsible for securing a draw site in the area served by each CSE office; and
- The contractor to have a results report in the hands of the referring office within 35 calendar days of the date of the electronic referral in order to be paid for the genetic test. (Allowances were made for bad addresses, "no-shows," and other problems.)

The program has standardized paternity testing costs and reduced those costs by a third.

Results

Nearly a year after the contract was initiated and after the resolution of early problems, the program has:

- Standardized paternity testing costs and reduced those costs by a third;
- Standardized the time frames involved in the paternity establishment process;
- Freed up time and resources for local child support staff by shifting the scheduling function to the contractor; and
- Arranged for monthly reporting of statistics to each local office and quarterly reporting of all local office results to the State office.

Since Georgia law recognizes electronic signatures, the child support office and contractor are working towards the expansion of their electronic communication to allow for the delivery of paternity results electronically, further reducing time frames.

Since Georgia law recognizes electronic signatures, the child support office and contractor are working towards the expansion of their electronic communication to allow for the delivery of paternity results electronically.

Georgia also is investigating the implementation of a "self-swab" program—a buccal swab done in a local office or in court by a putative father on himself when he has denied paternity or requested genetic testing.

If you would like more information about Georgia's genetic testing program, contact Robert Low at (404) 657-3895. □

New Information Available on OCSE Homepage

Based on feedback from the public, OCSE has added a section at the top of its Homepage on frequently asked questions. The site currently has 41 questions and answers. Sample questions:

- How do I get a child support order?
- Where can I find information on my state's child support laws?
- How can I get the amount of my child support order changed?

Access the Homepage at: http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse/index.html. □

Indiana Human Service Grants to Strengthen Role of Fathers

By: Tom Starnes

The State of Indiana has awarded $2 million in grants to 36 human service organizations to strengthen the role that fathers play in the lives of their children. Citing findings by the Institute of Responsible Fatherhood and Family Revitalization that show adverse effects on children growing up in fatherless homes, Indiana Governor Frank O'Bannon expressed the hope that these grants will help fathers understand why it is so important for them to take an active role in their children's lives.

One State university and 35 public, private, and nonprofit groups make up the list of grantees that are funded from savings achieved by Indiana through reductions in the State's welfare caseloads and from an Access and Visitation grant from the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement.

"I'm especially pleased that we have been successful in our efforts to reach out to leaders of churches and other faith-based organizations. They have stepped up in a big way to help all across Indiana."

.....Governor Frank O'Bannon

The monies awarded will be used to:

- Increase fathers' positive involvement with their children and improve their parenting skills;
- Improve fathers' accessibility to supportive services;
- Increase payment of child support;
- Help fathers and mothers cooperate in parenting;
- Decrease out-of-wedlock pregnancies;
- Increase the number of teenagers with high school or GED diplomas; and
- Increase establishment of paternity.

Seven of the grants were awarded to faith-based organizations—an outgrowth of Faith Works Indiana, a program that Governor O'Bannon kicked off last fall. One of the faith-based grantees, The Church Federation of Greater Indianapolis, received $100,000 which will be used to begin a mentoring program for young or potential fathers who are incarcerated in a juvenile correction facility.

The Reverend Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith, executive director of The Church Federation, said, "The sooner you intervene in these young men's lives, the better your chances are of making a positive, life-long difference. By working together, we as a community can have a positive impact on the lives of young men and help them become responsible members of society."

Governor O'Bannon praised the way in which the community has come together around this fatherhood initiative, saying, "All of us need to work together to spread this message and teach these lessons. I'm especially pleased that we have been successful in our efforts to reach out to leaders of churches and other faith-based organizations. They have stepped up in a big way to help all across Indiana."

The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration is overseeing the grants through its Fathers and Families program. For more information, contact Thurl Snell, Deputy Director of the Indiana Division of Families and Children, at (317) 233-3542.□

Tom Starnes is an Advocacy Relations Specialist in OCSE's Division of Consumer Services.

New York's Approach to Operating An Interstate Central Registry

By Rob Velcoff

For nearly four years, New York has not had an incoming interstate case fall outside the 10-day federally mandated timeframes for case processing. One of the main reasons for our success is that we have stayed close to the functions listed in the federal regulations (45 CFR 303.7 (a)) for Interstate Case Registries (ICR).

One of the main reasons for our success is that we have stayed close to the functions listed in the federal regulations for Interstate Case Registries.

In contrast to New York's approach, other states may have, in some instances, expanded their ICR units' tasks to include location, policy, case-building, working on outgoing interstate cases, customer service, and other functions. This may work well in some cases, but additional duties may also take away from the primary ICR tasks.

Concentrating on the basics, in my judgment, is what makes an ICR successful. Here are some suggestions for ICR managers on consistently meeting federal requirements.

- Log in all incoming interstate cases every day, on the exact date they are received. As you work, keep this log-in date in mind because the federally mandated 10-day timeframe has started ticking;
- Review each case for legal requirements only. If it's not in UIFSA or another of your state laws, then the ICR should not mandate it from Initiating Jurisdictions (IJ's);
- Know exactly what you're looking for when reviewing each type of case. The UIFSA forms matrix is an excellent place to start;

Concentrating on the basics is what makes an ICR successful.

- Send acknowledgments immediately upon review of a case, and keep an accurate log-out record;
- If the documentation sent by the IJ is insufficient for anything to be done on an incoming interstate case, it makes no sense to forward it on;
- Remember that it is not the ICR's job to do casework on individual interstate cases. Let the local child support offices and/or tribunals responsible for working child support cases do that; and
- Keep statistics on everything you do. In our office, the log-in, log-out, and all other statistics are done on a PC database, which is good for aggregating data.

Interstate Central Registry staff also should be in contact with the local districts handling the cases. They should be able to answer any questions, be knowledgeable about interstate case processing, and ensure that the local districts are well informed about UIFSA and all other interstate matters.

For more information about New York's ICR unit, contact Rob Velcoff at (518) 474-1801. □

Rob Velcoff is Chief, New York State Interstate Central Registry, Division of Child Support Enforcement.

Maryland Amnesty Yields $700,000 in Support

By: Teresa Kaiser

Maryland's Child Support Enforcement Administration's (CSEA) recent Amnesty 2000 campaign combined the efforts of law enforcement, the judicial system, and social services departments across the State, as well as media, local businesses, fatherhood groups, and community and faith-based organizations.

> *"The primary goal of child support enforcement in Maryland is to encourage parents to get involved—and stay involved—in their children's lives."*
>
> *—Governor Parris N. Glendening*

Amnesty 2000 resulted in the collection of more than $705,000 in overdue child support payments, with Baltimore City alone collecting more than $78,000. In addition, 1,470 wage liens were established statewide and 557 noncustodial parents received assistance for employment and other services.

While we in Maryland are pleased with the financial success of this effort, our intention was not simply to collect money. Rather, we hoped to see noncustodial parents re-establish relations with their children.

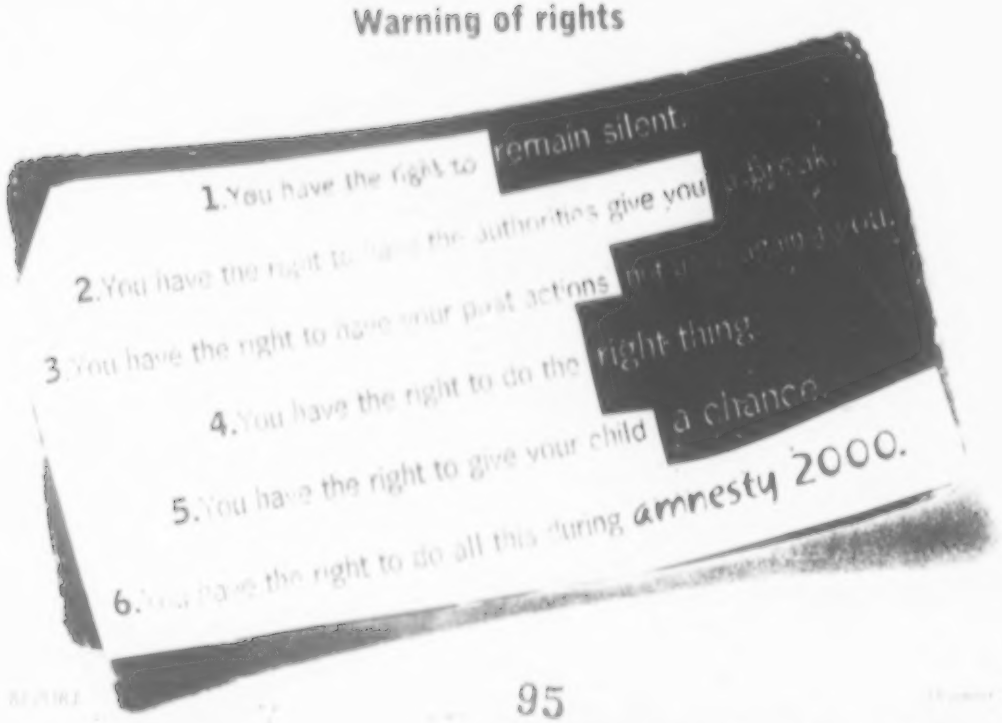
"The primary goal of child support enforcement in Maryland," as Governor Parris N. Glendening said, "is to encourage parents to get involved—and stay involved—in their children's lives. Amnesty 2000 gave parents the chance to do the right thing for their children, and thousands of Marylanders heeded the call."

All of Maryland's 23 jurisdictions and Baltimore City offered amnesty. To promote the opportunity, the campaign used public relations as the primary promotional tactic, supported by one week of statewide radio designed to encourage noncustodial parents to come into their local child support offices. Local staff participated in media training, conducted media relations, and distributed posters and information cards in community gathering places.

Total media coverage included 103 television news stories, 14 radio interviews and numerous other on-air mentions, and more than 20 newspaper articles.

For more information about Amnesty 2000, contact Maryland's Campaign for Our Children at (410) 576-9015. □

Teresa Kaiser is the Executive Director of Maryland's child support program.


Warning of rights
1. You have the right to remain silent.
2. You have the right to
3. You have the right to
4. You have the right to do the right thing.
5. You have the right to give your child a chance.
6. You have the right to do all this during amnesty 2000.

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The Net Impact of Child Support Payments on Work and Welfare Outcomes in Washington State

By: Carl Formoso

Washington State's Division of Child Support study of the effects of child support payments on work and welfare outcomes covered the period from late 1993 to early 1999. Three welfare participation cohorts were studied: (1) all adults who used any welfare from October through December 1993, with 13 quarters of follow-up; (2) all adults who used any welfare from October through December 1995, with 5 quarters of follow-up; and (3) all adults who used any welfare from October through December 1997, with 5 quarters of follow-up.

The study findings show that regular payments of child support are associated with lower incidence of welfare use and higher incidence of employment for custodial parents.

The study findings show that regular payments of child support are associated with lower incidence of welfare use and higher incidence of employment for custodial parents in subsequent quarters. This appears to arise from a lower recidivism rate and a higher tendency for employment once custodial parents have left welfare.

Since child support payments are assigned to the state while the custodial parent is on welfare, it is only after welfare exit that regular child support payments become an income stream for custodial families. It is reasonable,

Continued on page 7, "Washington State."

Computer Matching of Data Between Education and the National Directory of New Hires

Dear Colleague letter, DC-00-112, dated November 1, 2000 informed all state child support directors of a data match between information furnished by the Department of Education (DoEd) and information in the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH).

The Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2000 signed on November 29, 1999 amended subsection 453(j) of the Social Security Act to require the match. DoEd and OCSE are to conduct the data match for the purpose of obtaining information in the NDNH with respect to individuals who are in default on student loans or owe obligations to refund overpayment of grants awarded by DoEd.

OCSE will match information provided by DoEd with new hire, quarterly wage, and unemployment insurance information on individuals for whom a Social Security number has been verified. A similar match will occur every quarter thereafter. OCSE has worked closely with DoEd to preserve the confidentiality of the NDNH data.

DoEd will use income withholding to collect the defaulted loans and grant overpayments. The enabling legislation specifies "support collections under section 466 (b) shall be given priority over collection of any defaulted student loan or grant overpayment against the same income." OCSE will continue to work with states to ensure that the use of NDNH data matches for purposes other than collection of child support does not impede the effective operation of the NDNH for child support purposes.

If you have questions or would like further information, contact Richard Shullaw at (202) 401-4843.□

Child Support Children First

Military Pay Issues

Members of the armed forces will receive a 3.7 percent pay raise on January 1, 2001, starting with their January 15, 2001 paycheck. The new pay chart can be found at dfas.mil/money/milpay/pay. Amounts paid to service members for allowances may also be accessed through this web site.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) disperses wage withholding payments on the first of the month after the month from which the money was garnished. Military paydays are on the 1st and 15th of the month.

When the first of the month payday falls on a weekend or holiday, the payments are mailed the last business day prior to the weekend/holiday. This occasionally results in two checks being received in one month and no checks being received in other months.

The chart to the right shows that during calendar year 2001, enforcement agencies will receive two checks during the months of March, June, August, and November. Consequently, no checks are mailed in January, April, July, and September. Child support agencies need to be alert to this situation and appropriately credit the military member's account.

Pay Schedule 2001

Month of Deduction	*Payday*
January	February 1
February	*March 1*
March	March 30
April	*May1*
May	June 1
June	*June 29*
July	August 1
August	*August 31*
September	October 1
October	*November 1*
November	November 30
December	*December 31*

If you have any questions about military issues, call OCSE's military liaison, Marilyn Michaels, at (808) 692-7139 (please note Hawaiian time difference). □

Washington State

Continued from page 6.

therefore, to expect that a reliable income source, even if it were small, would help custodial parents stay off welfare and find and maintain employment.

The study findings suggest that regular child support payments have additional returns when combined with public services that help custodial parents leave welfare. Under AFDC, with entry into the JOBS program, and under TANF, with early participation in WorkFirst, there was an extra cost savings of about 20 percent compared to the sum of cost savings attributable to the separate programs.

For more information about this study contact Carl Formoso at (360) 664-5090.□

Carl Formoso is Research and Development Manager in Washington State's Division of Child Support.

Detroit Lions

Continued from page 1.

group cited Mr. Porcher for his support in numerous charitable causes, his involvement with the fatherhood campaign, and his presentations to fathers' groups. His consistent message to fathers: "It's as important to spend time with your children as it is to provide for them financially."

"It's as important to spend time with your children as it is to provide for them financially."

.....Robert Porcher

For more information contact Eileen Schrauben at (517) 335-3921.□

Eileen Schrauben is a Program Analyst with Michigan's Family Independence Agency.

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Child Support Course for Employers on Small Business Web

The October *Child Support Report* introduced an online course for employers developed by OCSE in collaboration with the Small Business Administration.

That course can be accessed at Http://www.sba.gov/classroom/courses.html.

If you attempted to view the course and were unsuccessful, the reason may be that your computer does not have a multimedia player installed.

Here's what you need to do. To install a free player, visit the website www.macromedia.com and perform the following tasks:

- Click tab marked "Downloads;"
- Click button for "Macromedia Shockwave and Flash Players;" and
- Follow the three steps for downloading and installing.

Return to the SBA Classroom and reload the course.

You should now be able to enjoy the course with full sound and animation. ☐

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